



Let us together make use of this Ramadan month with racing to practice charity, istiqamah in pursuit of maghfirah and increase alms. May all our charity be accepted by Allah swt. Marhaban Ya Ramadan.

Amirudin Shari  
Selangor Menteri Besar



# SELANGOR JOURNAL

## PH: First Year at the Helm

May this Ramadan bring all of you peace, progress, positivity and good health.



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On 9 May 2018, the surprising victory by Pakatan Harapan (PH) in Malaysia's 14th General Elections broke the previous government's 61-year hold on the governance of the nation—a phenomenon that reformed coalitional politics, and had the new administration putting forward a restructured agenda.

Story continues on Page 4



### Waste Management: A Slippery Slope

As we approach the fasting month for Muslims, every Malaysian is sure to be excitedly looking forward to the bazaars that will be popping up across the nation in conjunction with the festive season.

Story continues on Page 13



## Ihya Ramadan Brings Cheer to Residents

The Dato' Menteri Besar of Selangor, Amirudin Shari, took the chance to visit residents at five houses in the Sungai Tua state constituency as part of the *Ziarah Kasih Ihya Ramadan 2019* on 28 April.

Amirudin said the programme, which had become a tradition, was meant as a visit to the residents in the area, especially those who were sick.

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– Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari

”

The MB also made contributions to the residents in the form of basic necessities, such as kitchen utensils, adult diapers and small amounts of cash.

The MB added that he was also taking the opportunity to visit friends and supporters in the area who had helped him in the past but had since fallen sick and were no longer able to live a normal life.

“I hope that these contributions will lessen the burden they face, especially since the month of Ramadan is approaching” he added.

Amirudin also performed the *asar* prayers at the An Nur mosque in Kampung Wira Damai in Batu Caves prior to travelling by motorcycle to the five households to personally deliver the contributions.

## Malaysia Healthy for Media Freedom



Malaysia made history when it reached its highest-ever placing in terms of media freedom, based on a report by ‘Reporters Without Borders’.

In the report, Malaysia had leaped 22 spots on the list and placed at number 123, the highest among all Southeast Asian countries, and the highest in the nation’s history.

Dato' Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, attributes this accomplishment to Malaysia’s ability to cultivate a healthy arena that allows for media freedom.

“This is a very important achievement and should be a guide for all, because without the media working independently, democracy can only create

injustice,” he said in a statement. However, he said, freedom of the media also came with the responsibility to provide real facts, especially in the era of misinformation and non-factual views.

“Leaders and journalists have a common responsibility to defend and champion the freedom of every journalist in Malaysia, in line with the principles of our democracy,” he said.

The United Nations General Assembly declared 3 May as World Media Freedom Day to raise awareness on the importance of press freedom.

In addition, the United Nations reminded the government of its duty to respect and support freedom of speech, as set out under Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

## Leadership and Civil Servants Must Work in Synergy

The synergy between leaders and civil servants is important in realizing the aim of making Selangor a major state in Southeast Asia by 2025.

Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said the involvement of civil servants is very important in creating and carrying out policies that are proposed by leaders. The implementation of policies requires civil servants and leaders to work hand in hand.

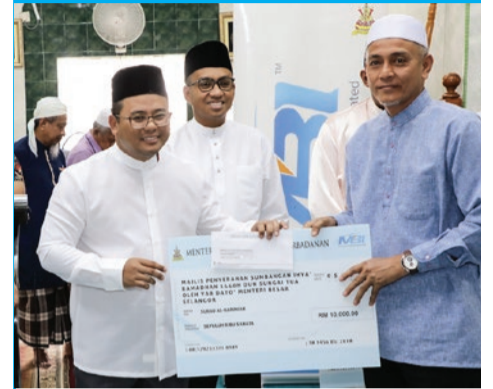
“Our experience of ruling Selangor for 10 years has taught us that mutual respect and maintaining professionalism

is important so implementation can be done well,” said Amirudin.

“We have placed our trust in our civil servants ... In the past, planning was given to consultants or outsiders but now we provide [such] opportunities to our civil servants,” he said.

He said this when delivering a welcome speech in conjunction with the inaugural dialogue in Shah Alam which featured former International Trade and Industry Minister, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, more commonly known as ‘Tok Pa’.

## MB Supports Semarak Ramadan Programmes



The Selangor state government is committed to supporting the *Menyemarak Ramadan Negeri Selangor* programmes that are being organized by multiple agencies

Dato' Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said that the programmes are an informal way of having a smart partnership when organizing the event.

“In conjunction with this month of Ramadan, various programmes have been drafted by relevant government agencies or non-governmental organizations (NGOs) who have agreed to take part in making this a success.”

“The State Government is very committed and supports this ongoing effort,” he said.

At the same time, Amirudin said religious institutions such as mosques and *surau* need to be active by organizing various activities to attract the attention of Muslims. “We need to attract all the people so that the people would be able to make the mosque the focus and the centre of the community.”

He added that this would cultivate better individual attitudes.

“Use [such activities] as a beginning, use it to attract them and show the integrity of Islam as a strong religion, to unify the society and not separate from different beliefs,” he said.

## SELANGOR JOURNAL

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*Honesty is the cornerstone of all success, without which confidence and ability to perform shall cease to exist.*

Mary Kay Ash

”



## Selangor Welcomes Government Funds for State Schools



Mosque in Gombak on 5 May after the opening ceremony of the district-level *Menyemarak Ramadan Bersama Masjid dan Surau* Programme, a programme aimed at enlivening the month of Ramadan through encouraging the public to go to mosques and *surau* (small prayer houses).

At the same time, Amirudin said that the allocation managed to help repair schools around the Klang Valley that had been damaged by pest attacks.

**GOMBAK** — Selangor welcomes the allocation of RM 3.43 million given by the Federal Government to build infrastructure for 10 schools in the state.

Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said the allocation coincided with the role and responsibility played by the government to rehabilitate the infrastructure in these 10 schools.

He said that Selangor is the state with the most affected and damaged schools due to termite attacks and soil structure, as many schools are located adjacent to oil palm plantations.

“The schools are affected due to the fact that the oil palm areas are not properly maintained—causing the number of termites to increase.”

“The actual amount of the allocation is so big that it has reached RM 7 million to repair schools affected by these pests,” said Amirudin.

He said this at the Al-Amaniah

**“The schools are affected due to the fact that the oil palm areas are not properly maintained—causing the number of termites to increase.”**

— Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari

Earlier, Minister of Economic Affairs, Dato’ Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, said in a statement that a total of RM 3.43 million had been allocated by the federal government through the Special Project Allocation to repair schools affected by pests in the Klang Valley.

Among the affected schools that are to receive the aid are Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan (SMK) Sungai Pusu, Gombak, and SMK Hulu Kelang in Selangor, as well as SMK Bukit Indah, Ampang, Kuala Lumpur.

## Tun M Reflects on PH’s First Anniversary

**KUALA LUMPUR** — The first year of the Pakatan Harapan (PH) government has been dedicated to consolidation, rehabilitation and resetting the nation amid the mess created by 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB), says Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The Prime Minister said as the government struggled to make real sense of the scandal it discovered, the damage was more extensive than expected and along the way, as it uncovered that the other pillars of the country’s economy were compromised as badly, if not worse.

“To sum it up, it had been a year of consolidation, rehabilitation and resetting our nation,” he said at the American Malaysian Chamber of Commerce’s (Amcham) Annual General Meeting here on Wednesday, 18 April.

“I believe we have turned the corner and we look forward to finally sitting down and pursuing our plans, instead of merely being tied down cleaning up everything,” he said.

Not all of the prices of goods have gone up since PH took control of Putrajaya, said Tun M, who added that some liked to “pinpoint to these things” without being fair to PH.

While explaining how the government is making efforts to lower and stabilize the price of goods, Tun M puts the blame on middlemen for the situation. He gave an example of vegetables being sold.

“In Cameron Highlands, for example, they sell vegetables at 50 sen per kilo but (because of middlemen) in the market, it becomes RM7 per kilo,” he said.

He also said PH is focused on seeing wages go up, which will dampen the effect of higher prices of goods.

According to Tun M, the PH government is also conscious that the country cannot develop, if it does not grow the economy.

“Therefore, we are committed to ensuring our policies are investor-friendly to both foreign and domestic investors. This government will strive to continue our engagement with multinationals like you,” he said.

“As we take your viewpoints into consideration, in turn, you will continue to view Malaysia as a favoured, strategic and profitable investment destination for US businesses now and in years to come,” said the Prime Minister. Mahathir repeated his earlier statement that there is no need for a Cabinet reshuffle, adding that entirely new politicians are not needed to replace them.

At least his Cabinet has “one year’s experience now”, he stated.

“If Cabinet members are replaced by people with no experience at all, then they will have to start from scratch, and it will be hard to ensure that they can do better than those who they replaced,” he said.

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# PH: First Year at the Helm



The coalition, with Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the helm, swore to eradicate the corruption associated with the previous government, as well as to control the rising cost of living, among other things—an act that is at the top of the public's interest.

Upon their victory, PH assured the nation that they would bring economic relief, restore investor confidence and also control public debt. It is no secret that the government had inherited a financial swamp amidst various other constraints. Be that as it may, PH proceeded on mega projects, such as the ECRL (East Coast Rail Link) while also reorganizing responsibilities and jurisdictions found in the country.

Besides reforming the Election Commission (EC) and correcting systemic flaws and favouritisms that stained the nation's democracy for past decades, PH also selected new leaders to the Electoral Commission, as well as taking the necessary measures to make public institutions, as well as parliament, more independent and liable.

## ■ Economic Uncertainty

Nevertheless, independent pollster Merdeka Centre reported that public approval for the new government has gone down to 39 per cent. The poll revealed that Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's personal popularity sits at 46 per cent, a clear indication that his influence still outweighs that of the coalition.

In August 2018, the poll recorded 71 per cent approval from the public. Merdeka Centre concluded that the deterioration in public support for the administration is due, among others, to the public's perception of the decline in the country's economic performance and concerns over Malay rights and privileges, as well as fair treatment of other races in Malaysia. One thing that is certain is that the deterioration of the nation's economy is amongst the topmost concerns for the public, with a focus on inflationary pressures and rising costs that the country is currently experiencing.

Even so, Merdeka Centre revealed that the respondents' understanding and patience with PH over the coalition's governance of Malaysia is on a positive note as two in three respondents said that it is necessary for the new government to be given more time to perform and deliver their promises, proving that the public remains understanding of the issues faced by the government and is willing to grant them time to take necessary measures.

## ■ PH Not to Be Blamed

Consequently, on 2 May, various economists pointed out that it is unfair to judge the current administration based on the poor short-term economic outlook in almost a year since PH came into power. Most are of the opinion that the current economic slump the country is facing cannot be solely attributed to the current administration, as it is apparent that there are many other intricate factors that have contributed to the nation's current economic outlook.

According to Malaysian Institute of Economic Research executive director, Datuk Zakariah Abdul Rashid, the public should not criticize the government's performance based on the current economic outlook, as it also depends on global and regional changes.

Speaking at the 'GE14 And the Year Since: Analyses and Perspectives' forum at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) on 2 May, Zakariah pointed out that some situations were beyond the control of the government. One example he cited was the price of crude oil.

Zakariah was reported as saying that Malaysia's economic fundamentals remain



firm and that the nation is still producing a trade surplus. He also pointed out that it is vital to keep in mind that PH had to cope with 'legacy' issues left behind by the previous government—some of which had been accumulating for decades.

"I would say the economic problem is overwhelming but not because of PH. This is because the problem has accumulated for many years, even under Tun Mahathir's first administration," he said.

Meanwhile, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) Vice Chancellor, Tan Sri Noor Azlan Ghazali, who is an economist, stated that PH has had to face many economic challenges head-on and applauded its move to rationalize several subsidy programmes in Malaysia.



**Malaysia's economic fundamentals remain firm and that the nation is still producing a trade surplus. He also pointed out that it is vital to keep in mind that PH had to cope with 'legacy' issues left behind by the previous government—some of which had been accumulating for decades.**

- Datuk Zakariah Abdul Rashid, Malaysian Institute of Economic Research executive director



By  
Batrisyia Jay

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■ **Progressing with Time**

On 9 May, PH celebrates its first year in power, and it is undeniable that the new government has fulfilled nearly a third of its economic promises so far. To commemorate PH's achievements, we have listed some of the accomplishments that have been effectively carried out by the administration to date:



Upon their victory on 9 May 2018, PH acted swiftly to implement its signature promises, including the abolition of GST.



PH allocated significant capital in order to support small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as well as to encourage technological adoption.



PH significantly improved the transparency of the nation's budget as well as the government's overall financial position.



PH has succeeded in mapping out a fool-proof plan to tackle and abolish corruption in the country. This includes important reforms of the public procurement system.

# Voices of The Public

As it is the one-year anniversary of the current administration, the team decided to venture out and find out the public's thoughts on how the nation has been progressing since the historic victory. Here is what they had to say:

**I think education system in Malaysia can be improved. Besides that, i hope the new government knows how to prioritize pressing matters that the nation is currently facing. However, i do think they need a little more time to find ways to execute their plans for the future.**

Alvera Raymond Kisil, 31,  
School Teacher

**Majority of the public are starting to lose trust in the new administration. However, I think that it's necessary for us to be more charitable in giving them time to fix most of the issues faced by our country. I feel that one year is still a short amount of time to remedy the nation's problems and I do believe that the government is doing their best in creating a better future for us Malaysians.**

Vignesh Raj, 24,  
University Student

**In all honesty, I don't see much difference in our economy with PH as the new administrator. But I am willing to give them more time as I believe that governing a country with problems and debts such as ours is no easy feat. I'll be hoping for the best from PH.**

Norah Ali, 29,  
Sales Executive



**I believe that the resuscitation of the Bandar Malaysia is one of PH's initiatives that will improve the nation's economy the most.**

The Prime Minister's Office, said in a statement (NST, 190419), "The project is expected to generate tremendous impact on urban development for Malaysia, drawing foreign direct investments and generating an expected gross development value (GDV) of RM140 billion."

"It will draw major international financial institutions, multi-national corporations (MNCs) and Fortune 500 Companies to locate their regional headquarters in Bandar Malaysia."

Bandar Malaysia is a hub for tourism, trade, culture, and innovation. It is Malaysia's local transportation node, connecting and bringing together next-generation infrastructure and passenger facilities. With the reinstatement of Bandar Malaysia, our transportation infrastructure will be taken up a level as there will also be a chance to reinstate the High-Speed Rail (HSR) Project that connects Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.

Transport infrastructure is one of the most important factors for a country's development progress. It has been proven in so many instances how transport infrastructure has added speed and efficiency to a country's progress. Good physical connectivity in the urban and rural areas is essential for economic growth.

Afnan 'Aqif Bin Mohd Pidaus, 27,  
Research Associate







## Malaysian Palm Oil Price Unsteady

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Malaysian palm oil futures inverted earlier gains to close one per cent down on 3 May, which fell on bearish production outlooks to chart the biggest weekly drop since early November.

The benchmark palm oil contract for July delivery on the Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange finished 1.1 per cent down at RM 2,010 (\$485.39) a tonne for its sixth decline in as many sessions.

Previously, palm oil had lost as much as 1.3 per cent to RM 2,006—its weakest since 11 December.

For the week, palm oil had lost 5.1 per cent for a second straight weekly decline.

Malaysia is the world's second-largest palm oil producer after Indonesia, and production rose to 1.67 million tonnes in March—up 8.3 per cent from February, according to the latest government data.

Prices for palm oil fell three per cent on Thursday due to weakness in soy-oil prices on the Chicago Board of Trade and soft demand sentiment.

On the first week of May, it was reported that Malaysia would defer export duties on crude palm oil for the rest of the year to boost exports and expand in new markets.

However, given that duty has been at zero per cent since September, traders say this may have little effect.

## Malaysia Manufacturing PMI Increases

**KUALA LUMPUR** — The country's Nikkei Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI) noticeably increased to reach a seven-month high in April amidst a return to growth for export orders.

The Nikkei Malaysia Manufacturing PMI increased in April to its highest recording of 49.4 compared to 47.2 in March, to return to its long-run average.

The increase is a major indication of Malaysia's GDP growth accelerating to just over five per cent, according to historical comparisons.

On 2 May, IHS Markit—which compiles the data—stated that the key to the upturn in the PMI was a renewed improvement in foreign demand in April, which had deteriorated business trends in prior months, adding that new export orders had risen for the first time in five months.

Higher workloads from overseas sources were credited to business wins in Europe, the US and countries in Asia such as Singapore and Japan.

Chris Williamson, IHS Markit chief business economist said April saw the picture of Malaysia's manufacturing econo-



my improved considerably as it was fuelled by the first improvement in export demand since last November.

"The headline PMI showed its largest monthly rise for nearly one and a half years, suggesting manufacturing should help drive faster economic growth to just over five per cent at the start of the second quarter, with the trade drag easing compared to prior months," said Williamson.

"The survey also brought signs that firms have an improved appetite to expand capacity, taking on staff in greater numbers as business confidence in the outlook jumped to its highest for over five years, adding to hopes that the slowdown has bottomed out," he added.

"Much will, of course, depend on the external environment, and a sustained upswing will be contingent on improving global trade flows."

## Reclaiming Asian Tiger Status

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng is assured that Malaysia is on the right track to strengthen its economy and fiscal status by 2021, thus leading the way to regaining its position as an Asian Tiger.

The government intends to reduce the country's current debt and liabilities of RM 1.087 trillion or 80.3 per cent of the GDP to 65 per cent in the course of this period through the renegotiation of mega-projects such as the mass rapid transit system.

Previously, soon after his appointment as the nation's finance minister, Lim had announced that government debt and liabilities had exceeded RM 1 trillion, a figure that fired market anxiety and raised the prospect of a credit-rating downgrade.

This figure included federal government debt of RM 686.8 billion or 50.8 per cent of GDP and government guarantees of RM 199.1 billion or 14.6 per cent of GDP.

"After a six/seven-month effort by the government, the debts and liabilities were reduced to RM 1.07 billion, or a reduction of RM 17 million," said Lim.

"But, from the aspect of a percentage to the GDP, it was [a reduction] by 5.5 per cent from 80.3 per cent to 74.8 per cent," he added.

Lim said this in a selected media interview ahead of the first-year anniversary of the Pakatan Harapan coalition's



historic victory in the 14th General Election on 9 May of last year.

Meanwhile, Lim also addressed the importance of transparency being implemented by the government, particularly in addressing scandals such as those involving 1Malaysia Development Bhd. (1MDB), Tabung Haji and Felda, while at the same time combating the corrupt practices by the previous administration.

Lim stated that the government estimated about RM 805 million in savings had been made through the renegotiation of infrastructure projects, while a projection of RM 4 billion likely raised from the Sales and Services Tax (SST) is to be allocated for critical ministries and for the *rakyat*.

"Seen from the point of performance, although we faced much pressure from the aspect of finance, Malaysia has not become bankrupt, as we feared, when the Goods and Services Tax (GST) was abolished," said Lim.

In other developments, Lim said the

Pakatan Harapan government had begun the process of repaying tax refund arrears of RM 37 billion left by the previous government.

The process began in January this year and will be completed by the coming October.

The Finance Minister then pointed out that inflation is being well-managed, having been recorded at 0.4 per cent in February, and international rating agencies had also maintained their A3 ratings for Malaysia.

In 2018, Malaysia's foreign direct investments (FDIs) also increased, while exports and the current account have also been in positive territory.

The country had recorded a 48 per cent increase in approved FDIs across all sectors at RM 80.5 billion last year.

"Although we faced financial problems following the 1MDB scandal, the confidence of foreign investors or foreign funds remained strong and they also maintained the level of Malaysia's

credit rating," explained Lim.

"So, this is a test that Malaysia passed in terms of managing the economy and the fiscal position," he said.

Lim then stated that Malaysia's economy was still developing progressively with strong economic fundamentals, alongside savings from renegotiations undertaken for infrastructure projects.

The savings were used to rescue Tabung Haji and Felda, which needed an injection of RM 17.8 billion and RM 6.23 billion, respectively.

"It also left Malaysia pressured, as originally we thought the savings could be used to repay the 1MDB debts and such. But it seems now, we have to still find our own sources to repay it," said Lim.

The Finance Minister noted that the revival of the Bandar Malaysia and East Coast Rail Link (ECRL) projects were at the preliminary stages, and the ministry was awaiting complete reports related to both.

"We look at [the revival of the projects as being of] national interest. Various aspects were considered, including the ECRL deal involving an agreement between the government and China, which is Malaysia's largest trading partner," said Lim.

He further explained that had the ECRL been discontinued, Malaysia would have had to pay compensation that would have reached billions of ringgit.





By  
Batrisyia Jay

# Prioritizing the Special Needs Community

To commemorate Autism Month, Selangor Journal talked about the importance of getting to know more about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in our Woman's Section last month. For this issue, we decided to shed more light on the special needs community in Selangor.

With that in mind, Selangor Journal interviewed Fahda Nur Ahmad Kamar, Chairperson of *Majlis Tindakan OKU Selangor* (Selangor Council of Action for the Disabled, MTOS) to gain more insight into this community that is often overlooked by the public.

A mother of three, Fahda Nur, who is also a lawyer, is currently the Managing Partner of her very own law firm called Fahda Nur&Yusmadi. At the start of this year, Fahda was elected as the Chairperson of MTOS for a term of two years, making her the perfect candidate to highlight the importance of being aware of and supporting the special needs community in Selangor.

## ■ A Council of Advocates

"*Majlis Tindakan OKU Selangor* (MTOS) was set up in 2018 and it was announced by the current EXCO for Health, Welfare, Women and Family Empowerment, Y.B. Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud," said Fahda. She explained that the council acts as an official body under the EXCO's office, with the primary role of giving views, advice, suggestions as well as to organize initiatives on policy, programmes, activities and issues relating to the disabled community in Selangor.

Modelled upon the *Majlis OKU Kebangsaan* (National Council for Persons with Disabilities), under the Disabled Persons Act 2008, the council aims to bring together activists and stakeholders that advocate aware-

ness concerning the needs of persons with disabilities, or OKU, in Selangor. However, the *Majlis OKU Kebangsaan* is quite different as it focuses more on a council consisting of secretary-generals from different ministries—thus making it more administrative in nature. "MTOS is akin to having 'council members' consisting of activists so that the government will receive proper feedback. MTOS hopes to support the state government by suggesting programmes and activities that would address the needs of the OKU community in the state," added Fahda.



Fahda Nur Ahmad Kamar, Chairperson of *Majlis Tindakan OKU Selangor* (Selangor Council of Action for the Disabled, MTOS)

## ■ Malaysians Need to be More Exposed

"Malaysians are caring in general. However, the stigma, fear and prejudice that surround the special needs community remains at large," said Fahda. She stated that there seems to be a general perception that a special needs child is helpless and requires full-time care. According to Fahda, this is far from the truth as many are smart, able and capable of living independently. Thus, to realize this, society must trust them and give full support, said Fahda.

"They may need a bit more time to accomplish tasks, so we have to be understanding. With just a little care and compassion, they will thrive," said Fahda.

She added, "Disability is just a label. It does not represent the true ability of a person, especially the strength, tenacity and determination that many of them possess."

Despite numerous campaigns, Fahda feels that the country still lacks awareness and understanding, as many do not understand the different

types of disabilities that exist around them. Fahda explained that most of these individuals are able and competent, yet society tends to misjudge them, hence resulting in such individuals being able to gain access to education, healthcare and employment in the country.

"For instance, a special needs child with learning disabilities—despite her ability to read and write—may not necessarily be allowed to join mainstream education. This is due to teachers lacking the [required] knowledge and skills, with many of them fearing having to teach a special child," noted Fahda.

"I have met many myself. They tend to fear the child and hence the rejection. Only those with an open mind and big heart are receptive to special children," she added.

## ■ More Employment Opportunities Needed

According to Fahda, those with physical disabilities tend to only have mobility issues, yet they still find it hard to be employed. "It all boils down to perception and society's willingness to accommodate them. Our target is a mere one per cent, yet we are nowhere near this target," Fahda stated.

In Malaysia, the special needs community with learning disabilities are mostly able-bodied and capable of working, yet employers are reluctant to hire them. As such, Fahda feels that our nation should learn from Australia, where there are factories employing people with autism and Down syndrome.

"They are hardworking and as they are able to do repetitive work without complaint, they hardly take leave off work," said Fahda while adding that productivity is always high amongst individuals with special needs.

"They are always very honest and give their best in whatever they do. Yet, here in Malaysia, we are happier employing cheap foreign labour. We forget to tap into an existing market of the most hard-working community—the special needs community."

## ■ Trained Educators are Vital

Fahda stated that it is important for the government to educate teachers on how to deal with and care for special needs pupils in the country. "For some reason, the number of children born with special needs is on the rise. We must therefore be ready to provide them with the best education possible," noted Fahda.

"I applaud the federal government for introducing the 'zero-reject' policy. However, we must make sure that it also should translate into 'zero-neglect' policy. Just because we do not reject, it does not guarantee that we do not neglect. We must have enough qualified teachers, staff and equipment when they enter school," Fahda added. "All teachers need to be trained, and once trained they will be able to handle [special needs pupils], especially if they have behavioural issues."

Fahda also feels that therapists—such as physiotherapists and occupational therapists—should not just be placed in hospitals but also in every school with special needs children. "We always talk about having more doctors but we forget about the allied health practitioners and special education teachers. We need to have them ready in schools [to teach special needs pupils]." Fahda's view is that it is important to educate, not medicate special needs children.

## ■ Selangor Cares for the Community

Although Selangor is a pioneer state when it comes to special needs awareness, Fahda feels that there is still room for improvement. "We still have not built our one-stop community centres all around Selangor, and we need to have proper government-run centres that offer affordable therapy, education programmes and lessons for independent living to this community," said Fahda.

Fahda added that those in

charge should consider giving long-term measures, as not all individuals with special needs receive proper care, especially if the guardian or caretaker has passed on. "We need to set up hostels that allow adults with disabilities to live together, independently," added Fahda.

With this in mind, the state government has launched many initiatives to support the special needs community in the state. "The state offers the *Bantuan ANIS* (Anak Istimewa Selangor, or Selangor Special Children) initiative, which is a one-off assistance for the funding of purchase of medical or therapeutic equipment, or for medical or therapy fees, up to a maximum of RM 5,000," explained Fahda.

**Apart from *Bantuan ANIS*, the state government has come up with these initiatives to further lend a helping hand to the community:**



### CIKGU ANIS

free training of kindergarten teachers to encourage ordinary kindergartens to accept children with special needs.



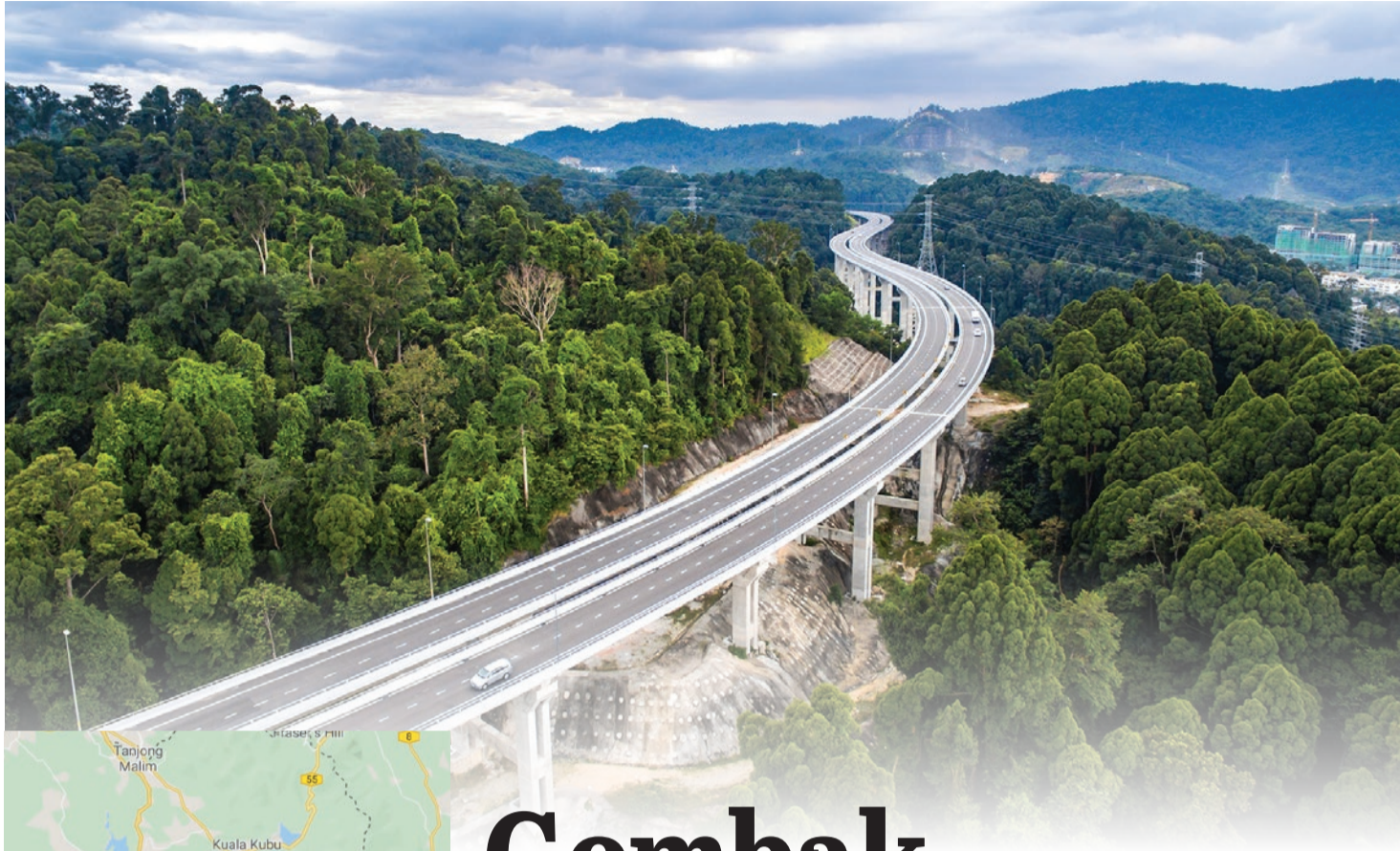
### *Bantuan Sihat Selangor*

assistance from the state government to resolve certain medical issues, such as cataracts, dialysis, purchase of prosthetic limbs and hearing aids.

Fahda has no doubt that Selangor excels at providing the support needed by the special needs' community in the state. However, she wishes that a one-stop centre for special needs children and adults will be built in the future, beginning with the state of Selangor. "This centre is needed not only for them to have therapy, but also to be trained with skills for independent living, and even to learn how to socialize with one another," said Fahda.

She concluded that society must learn to allow the disabled community to be a part of our everyday community and to embrace them wholeheartedly in order for them learn and grow, regardless of age.





**Gombak**  
Selangor

The Gombak district is the third-smallest district in Selangor. However, even though it is a small district, it has a population of 683,000 based on a 2010 census. The population is expected to grow to 942,600 people by 2020, based on predicted population growth. The Gombak district is populated by 167,530 households, with each having an average of four people per household.

# Gombak - the Pulse of Selangor

By  
**Muhaimin Merican**

Once a part of Kuala Lumpur before Kuala Lumpur was made a Federal Territory on 1 February 1974, the district of Gombak is a district that has something to offer for everyone.

From the urban housing developments in Bukit Antarabangsa to the quiet countryside of Kuang, to the bustling life of Kepong and Ampang, the Gombak district is probably the one with the most diverse landscape among the nine districts of Selangor.

The Gombak district is the third-smallest district in Selangor. However, even though it is a small district, it has a population of 683,000 based on a 2010 census. The population is expected to grow to 942,600 people by 2020, based on predicted population growth. The Gombak district is populated by 167,530 households, with each having an average of four people per household.

Since 1997, the district capital of Gombak has been Bandar Baru Selayang. Prior to that, Rawang was the district capital for over 20 years, from 1974 to 1997. In terms of local governance, the Gombak district is uniquely different from other districts in Selangor, in that the district is split into two local administrations. The Ampang Jaya Municipal Council administers the Ampang area, while the Selayang Municipal Council administers the other parts of the district.

Gombak is made up of 5 different *mukim* or sub districts, namely Ampang, Batu, Setapak, Hulu Kelang and Rawang.

Other localities that are situated in Gombak district include Batu Arang, Kuang, Rawang, Bandar Kundang, Gombak Town, Selayang, Kepong and Hulu Kelang.

Gombak borders Kuala Lumpur to the southeast and the Genting Highlands to the east. Gombak and some other districts in Selangor, are situated within the Klang Valley, in which Kuala Lumpur is also located.

## ■ An Opulent District

The Gombak district is one of the richest districts in Selangor. In 2016, the Selayang sub-district itself made a total of RM 164,600,000. From this amount, a total of RM 105,941,880 was made from taxes, while RM 43,080,190 was made from non-tax revenue. The sub-district also spent a total of RM 164,600,000 for that year, with a total of RM 88,963,350 spent on supplies and services for the people under the jurisdiction of the Selayang Municipal Council.

In addition, the Selayang Municipal Council declared a total of RM 100,563,693.45 in tax assessment from all three sub districts under it, as well as from special properties. The Municipal Council also declared a total of 193,506 in units of holdings it had from the three sub districts under its administration. The holdings were parts of enterprises, businesses and homes as well as special properties.

## ■ Historical Significance

Gombak is a district that has a rich historical past.

The earliest recorded history of a town in Gombak dates to the 1800s when it is recorded that it was a settlement for immigrants from Minangkabau. The Minang language, which is the language spoken by the Minang people, is still alive and widely spoken by pockets of Minang people living in present-day Gombak. Old mosques in the Gombak area, such as the Masjid Lama Batu 6 Gombak, are still standing to this day.

However, other parts of the Gombak district, such as Rawang and Batu Arang, had more prominent historical significance. Established in the early 19th century, Rawang actually attracted miners to create a township there due to its potential as a tin-mining site.

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Rawang's tin mines ceased operation in 1959

First residential house to have electricity in the country



Photo from Jimmy Sidhu

In 1894, the first electric generator in the then-Malaya was built in Rawang in order to support the tin-mining industry there. This made Rawang the first town to have electricity. Rawang was also the first town to have street lights, and the Rawang train station, which still stands to this day, was the first train station in the region to be equipped with electricity.



# Gombak: A Little Something For Everybody

If you are looking to visit a place where you could find important historical and geographical landmarks, the Gombak district is definitely a place you would have to visit.



## Batu Caves

The district is home to one Malaysia's most famous landmarks, the Batu Caves. Rising almost 100 metres above the ground, the Batu Caves house a temple complex which consists of three main caves and a few smaller ones. The biggest, referred to as Cathedral Cave or Temple Cave, has a very high ceiling and features ornate Hindu shrines. To reach it, visitors must climb a steep flight of 272 steps.

Since 1892, the Batu Caves have been the site for the annual Thaipusam festival. Tourists from all over the world visit the caves during the festival to take part in the pilgrimage which is a part of the festival.



## Zoo Negara

The Gombak district also houses the national zoo of Malaysia, Zoo Negara. Established in 1963, Zoo Negara features about 400 species of Malaysian and exotic mammals, reptiles and birds.

Zoo Negara is situated only 12 km from the centre of Kuala Lumpur. Its aquarium, named after the first Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, is a very popular attraction. Tunku Abdul Rahman Aquarium displays over 80 species of aquatic animals, both marine and freshwater, including invertebrates.



## Orang Asli Museum

This small but interesting museum is located at the 24th kilometre on Jalan Gombak, and showcases the history and traditions of the indigenous Orang Asli people that still call this district their home. The museum was officially opened on 29 September, 1987, by Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, and has a display of dioramas and short video documentary clips of Orang Asli rituals. Visitors can gain much information about the various Orang Asli tribes, and the museum also showcases the traditional tools, utensils and crafts produced by the Orang Asli. The museum also highlights the contributions of the Orang Asli to the effort in combating the communist insurgency in Malaysia.



## Templer Park

Templer Park, one of Malaysia's oldest forest reserves, can also be found in the Gombak district. The forest reserve is 1,214 ha in size and it was named in honour of Sir Gerald Templer, a British High Commissioner in Malaya. It was gazetted as a forest reserve on 8 September 1954.

Templer Park houses several rare species of flora and fauna within its centuries-old lush, green jungle. One of the rarest species that can be found there is the Asian Serow, which is an endangered species. Visitors of Templer Park can also view the trees in the park that are estimated to be hundreds of years old.



## Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM)

The Forest Research Institute of Malaysia is a world-renowned centre for tropical forestry research, with over 100 years of experience in forestry and forest products research. Also called FRIM, it is located in Kepong, a residential and commercial area that is only a 20-minute drive from Kuala Lumpur city centre.

The institute grounds are a popular attraction among locals. Jogging, hiking, and cycling are the most popular activities here. There are also bicycles for rent at reasonable rates with which to explore the institute grounds.



## Universities in Gombak

Gombak is certainly a university district, with several such institutions of higher learning in the district. Perhaps most well-known is the main campus of International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), with its Middle-Eastern inspired architecture. The campus, which occupies a 2.8 sq. km. site, is traversed by Sungai Cincin and is a mini-city in itself, with branches of several banks, a post office and various eateries at several locations on the campus offering food from different parts of the Islamic world. An interesting feature is perhaps the women's-only swimming pool at the Female Sports Complex, which is open to the public for a small fee.

### Old and New

Over the years, the Gombak district has progressed to keep up with the nation's capital, Kuala Lumpur. However, although the district has stepped into the 21st century with its high-rise condominiums, high-tech hospitals and various educational institutions, the district has managed to maintain a small part of its traditional roots and rich historical heritage.

Gombak and its small towns hold a special historical significance in our country's history. As Malaysians, it is our responsibility to ensure that even as we progress into a more modern world, we do not leave behind our heritage and history.

To find out what the Gombak district had to offer, we talked to residents in the district regarding what they found so special about the district which is home to 700,000 people. This is what some residents from different parts of the Gombak District had to say:

“““

I have lived in Sungai Buloh since 1995. I can see the town and district is definitely heading into a more modern era as we even see apartments rising in areas where there were no such developments 5 to 10 years back.

– Muhammad Aqeeb, 24, Sungai Buloh resident.

“““

My favourite thing about the district is when hundreds and thousands of worshippers gather at the Batu Caves for the annual Thaipusam parade. The whole scene feels surreal and so beautiful. It really depicts the multicultural aspect of Malaysia perfectly.

– Thasha Nair, 26, Rawang resident.

“““

The Gombak district really has something for everyone. From quiet villages and lush green forest to large highways and bustling modern towns. It really stands out in that aspect.

– Puteri Balqis, 31, Ampang resident.

“““

My family has lived in the Gombak district since the 1980s and it is really an eye opening experience to see it grow. The population here has grown tremendously too. I hope it will continue to grow and maybe we can become a city in the future.

– Kim Leng, 52, Kepong resident.

“““

I never knew how historical our district was until I read that Rawang was the first town to have electricity in Malaysia!

– Diana Seow, 23, Sungai Buloh resident.

“““

I travelled from Terengganu to study in IIUM here. I must say the cultural clash in this district brings out the best in terms of food. You can find food for everyone here.

– Mohd. Nazrin, 19, IIUM Gombak student.

“““

Gombak is located in a strategic place. You can travel anywhere in Selangor from here.

– Thenesh Kumar, 35, Selayang Resident.

“““

The most beautiful part about the district definitely has to be the part of the newly-constructed Rawang Bypass, where you pass through the elevated forest at 60 metres in the air, and it gives the impression of driving through mist. Everyone should give that a try.

– Atiqah Haris, 27, Selayang Resident.



# SELANGOR QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL

## 10 Schools in KL, Selangor Get RM 3.43 m Allocation for Infrastructure

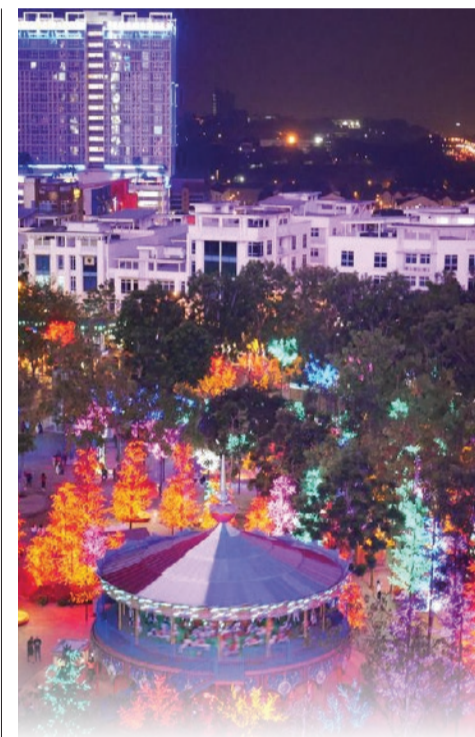


Ten schools in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor have been allocated RM 3.43 million for various infrastructure projects. The Economic Affairs Ministry in a statement said the assistance was channelled via the Special Project Allocation to build better facilities and to meet the needs of students and teachers.



## MB visits Taman Keramat Permai Flats for inspection

Dato' Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari visited more than 200 residents of Block F at Taman Keramat Permai Flat after they were ordered to vacate the building and moved to a temporary evacuation centre at Keramat AU2 multipurpose hall after cracks found in the structure of the building were reported to be worsening. The residents were finally allowed to return home on May 4. Two consultants appointed by the Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) have confirmed the building was safe for occupation.



## 67% of Selangor Civil Servants are satisfied with Their Leaders

A total of 67 per cent of civil servants are satisfied with their relationship with the political leadership since the Pakatan Harapan government became in charge of the administration of Selangor 10 years ago.



## Selangor shuts down illegal waste centres

The state has shut down more than 90 illegal plastic waste centres in the state up until 22 April 2019. In addition to the 90 that was shut down, 7 of the cases have had action taken against them.



## 120 Families Need to Receive MBSA's Ramadan Donation

The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) has added 120 families to receive its Ramadan donations in conjunction with the Ziarah Ramadan program. MBSA, through the Shah Alam Resident Representative Council, identified five persons from each zone based on certain criteria, among them underprivileged single mothers, the under-educated, senior citizens and members of the special-needs community.



# NATIONAL NEWS QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL

## Abdul Hamid Officially takes over as IGP



Datuk Seri Abdul Hamid Bador has officially taken over as the new Inspector-General of police. This follows the handing-over ceremony between Abdul Hamid and outgoing IGP Tan Sri Mohamad Fuzi Harun at the Police Training Centre. Abdul Hamid, who was director of the Special Branch, handed over the reins of his previous department to Datuk Ramli Hassan, who will assume the duty in an acting capacity.



## Health Ministry Launches New Five-Year Anti-Smoking Campaign

The Health Ministry has launched a five-year 'Speak Out' campaign to empower people to encourage smokers to quit smoking. Its minister, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, urged the people to support the 'Speak Out: Express Your Right, Protect Your Lungs' campaign to make it a success. He said the campaign was launched in conjunction with the coming Ramadan with the theme 'No Tobacco and Fresh Breath Beginning Ramadan' for its national-level celebration, as the Ramadan month was the best time for people to change.

## Buffer Zone Imposed to Protect Mulu National Park

A 1 km buffer zone will be designated along the common border between Mulu National Park and a provisional lease (PL) area issued to a plantation company. Urban Planning, Land Administration and Environment Assistant Minister Datuk Len Talif Salleh said this was a part of measures taken to safeguard the integrity of the national park's boundaries, and to prevent any encroachment or disturbances.

## Malaysia Appoints New Chief Justice

The appointment of Datuk Tengku Maimun Tuan Mat as the new Chief Justice is yet another milestone in the judiciary, as she is the first woman to take on the role. Tengku Maimun move from the High Court to the Federal Court after 12 years, before being now made Chief Justice.





## Preparations for KL 2040 Master Plan Ongoing

**KUALA LUMPUR** - In preparation for the Kuala Lumpur 2040 Master Plan, which is projected to be gazetted by the end of 2020, six pre-consultation sessions have been conducted with all parties.

These include the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) advisory board, professional bodies, youth organisations, government agencies, NGOs as well as Kuala Lumpur MPs.

"We plan to gazette the new KL Master Plan by late 2020, because after that, the current

Kuala Lumpur 2020 Master Plan no longer applies," said Federal Territories Minister, Khalid Abdul Samad.

Khalid stated that the plan is quite flexible and deemed it to be "a living document, as there will be changes along the way". The move to gazette the finalized version as at 2015—with the addition of the Kuala Lumpur City Plan (KLCP) 2020—was not a political decision but is based on professional views and advice from sources internally and externally of DBKL,

said Khalid.

"I was told to gazette the latest plan and the addendum contains changes from 2015 to 2018," he said.

The plan was gazetted on 30 October last year.

Meanwhile, an objection to the gazetted plan was filed in court on 8 February, claiming that it is flawed and that the 2012 or 2008 plan should be gazetted instead.

"Since this is a legal case, I will let the court decide," added Khalid.

## More TOD Projects for Selangor

In a bid to increase the use of public transport, more transit-oriented developments (TODs) will come up on land owned by Railway Assets Corp. (RAC) in Selangor.

According to Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, the focus for the TOD is to build affordable houses.

It was reported that the TOD developments would begin in Bangi and Port Klang.

Initial developments will also come up in Shah Alam, where RAC owns 5.3 ha of land located between Bukit Subang Jaya and the Batu Tiga railway station.

Tasked to manage, administer and maintain assets related to the railway infrastructure and ancillary facilities in Malaysia, RAC owns about 1,461 ha of railway land in Selangor.

Nationwide, it owns 15,378 ha of land along the KTM railways and in prime areas. To date, around 80 per cent of the land has been used to build 1,650 km of tracks from Padang Besar to Johor Bahru, and from Tumpat to Gemas, with a total of 170 stations, 16 depots and warehouses.

Menteri Besar Selangor Inc. (MBI Selangor) and RAC are drafting a development plan to transform land belonging to RAC land in Selangor, with the aim of promoting sustainable and liveable communities.

According to Amirudin, the development would make a provision for desirable and affordable housing and good

connectivity, while simultaneously looking into revitalizing economic development around railway stations.

He said this after the signing of a memorandum of understanding between MBI Selangor and RAC early this month. The signing was witnessed by Transport Minister Anthony Loke.

**“the development would make a provision for desirable and affordable housing and good connectivity, while simultaneously looking into revitalizing economic development around railway stations.”**

- Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari

The partnership is in support of the federal government's goal to realize Selangor's vision to be a Smart State by 2025. The government aims to accomplish this by connecting integrated public transportation with affordable homes.

"We are constantly challenging ourselves to resolve the rakyat's issues. This effort will also work towards revitalizing economic development around railway stations and their surrounding communities," said Amirudin.

Although the affordable

houses are located in transportation hubs, MBI Selangor and RAC will ensure that prices agree with the state government's policy for an affordable house to cost RM 250,000 and the federal government's policy, which sets the prices of such properties at below RM 300,000.

RAC has the skill to undertake TOD developments, having completed one with SP Setia Bhd. around the Abdullah Hukum light rail transit station in KL Eco City. The corporation has also started a TOD venture with MKH Bhd. for Kajang 2, a new township located in the vicinity of Kajang.

Meanwhile, Loke stated that the existence of affordable homes in transportation hubs will impact the trend of public transport utilization.

According to Loke, the existing rail services on RAC land, which would make way for TODs, would drive population and economic growth in the areas.

"Railways are the most effective (mode of transportation) and frequently used by people living in cities. More affordable homes available nearby railway stations will increase the ridership. In addition to the rail sector, public transport services, such as taxis, e-hailing services and buses, will also have an impact on the increase in the number of users, when these railway stations are used as stops for them to pick up and drop off passengers," he said.

## EMHub—A Boost to Selangor's Aspirations



**KOTA DAMANSARA** - Located on a 3.8 ha site in Kota Damansara, Malaysia's first e-commerce hub (EMHub) could potentially turn Selangor into a global trading hub and smart city.

Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said e-commerce is moving in a big way and Selangor is encouraging corporations to have more set-ups in the state.

Aside from the infrastructure and e-fulfilment capabilities provided, Selangor Information Technology and E-Commerce Council will facilitate and simplify a digital economy ecosystem which consist of a payment gateway, logistics services or online marketplaces, as well as talent development capabilities such as e-commerce classes, accelerator programmes and co-working spaces.

"The EMHub provides facilities to the sellers to have their warehouse, showroom and offices under one roof while operating their business online. We hope it will encourage more opportunities and advancement in a conducive digital economy ecosystem," said Amirudin.

He said this at the EMHub ground-breaking ceremony here last week.

Datuk Teng Chang Khim, Senior executive councillor and chairman of the Standing Committees for Investment, Industry and Commerce, (Small and Medium Enterprises) said the state government is committed to turning Selangor into a regional e-commerce hub.

A six-storey ramp-up facility located in Persiaran Surian, EMHub will be developed at a cost of RM 600 million.

This is a flagship project by SCLand Development Sdn. Bhd., a subsidiary of Alcom Group Bhd.

According to SCLand managing director, Datuk Tony Lim, the EMHub will offer a one-stop solution complete with office suites, showroom and distribution centre facilities, and retail space.

It also offers multiple-sized meeting rooms, a rooftop function hall, as well as recreational and lifestyle facilities.

According to Lim, EMHub comprises two blocks—Hub 1 and Hub 2—which will be fully completed by 2022. More than 50 per cent of the units in Hub 1 have been sold, said Lim.

"This is proof that there is strong demand for e-commerce facilities," he said.

The 234 retail and office units range between 2,196 and 4,014 sq. ft. and are priced from RM 850,000 to RM 3 million.

Lim also added that Hub 2 will open to the market soon.

Datuk Seri Subahan Kamal, Alcom chairman, said the EMHub is a fitting space for start-ups or brick-and-mortar small and medium enterprises venturing into e-commerce.

"Supported by high-speed fibre optic broadband, 24/7 security, uninterrupted power supply and more, we have our e-commerce players' needs covered in every aspect," he added.





## Waste Management: A Slippery Slope

By  
Muhaimin Merican

Continued from cover page...

These Ramadan bazaars are food Meccas, at which you will find such diverse offerings as selections of delectable *kuih*, mixed rice, drinks and other delicious local delicacies. Looking at these mouth-watering offerings may make us forget that most of this food will be thrown away at the end of the day if it is not sold.

In addition, you will see hundreds of customers at these bazaars carrying colourful plastic bags filled with the various food and drink items they managed to snag during their stroll down the neighbourhood bazaar. Does it not make you wonder where all the waste from this goes? Like all plastic waste in Malaysia, it will end up in a landfill where it is most likely to remain for hundreds of years.

### ■ Waste in Malaysia: Red Flags

The amount of waste in Malaysia has reached a staggering amount. For example, we produce a staggering 38,000 tonnes of solid waste every single day. Solid waste is the useless and unwanted products that are disposed of in a solid state.

If that is not a reason to be worried, this number is expected to rise to 40,000 tonnes by 2030. This is caused by advancements made by our society, and population growth. Out of the 38,000 tonnes produced, only 24 per cent are recycled while the remaining 76 per cent end up in landfills where they rot or wait to be burned. One of the three major environmental issues in Malaysia, solid waste plays a big role in harming our natural environment as solid waste disposal slowly encroaches into forested and green areas, which are cleared in

order to create more landfills to fill with our solid waste.

When it comes to food waste, Malaysians waste food equal to an amount that could feed 12 million people every single day. This amount of food could feed members of our society who are struggling to put a meal on their table every day.

### ■ Waste Management

You would think a nation that produces such a large amount of waste would have a high standard of waste management but, unfortunately, the waste management system in Malaysia continues to be rather poor. The mismanagement of disposal of waste products contributes greatly to the waste problem in Malaysia, beginning with the outdated and weak documentation of waste to the inefficient storage and collection system commonly employed. It all plays a part, and we must put an end to it to achieve a healthier Malaysia in the future.

Beginning in 2018, it was reported that foreign countries had been dumping their plastic waste in Malaysia. This began when China issued a ban on the import of solid waste in order to curb the amount of waste the nation had been taking in to be processed, which was estimated to amount to half of the world's overall waste before the ban was instated. After the implementation of the ban by the Chinese government, many nations, such as Australia and Hong Kong, scrambled to find other countries to process their waste, and Malaysia soon became the dump site for the waste of developed nations.

### ■ Waste: Human problem or Environmental problem?

Although we view waste and its improper management as a human problem, it actually has a great impact on our environment. One of the major effects of our waste disposal pattern is that it can heavily impact climate change.

How does improper waste disposal affect climate change? It is because cli-

mate change is caused by the emission of greenhouse gases (GHG), which are produced not only through the manufacturing of products but also through waste generation. High levels of GHG emissions will affect our planet and its atmosphere.

Another way that our mismanagement of waste disposal affects the environment is through the dumping of waste, solid or chemical, into our beloved rivers. Common among factories and a fast and convenient way of getting rid of waste, dumping waste into rivers has a long-lasting impact on the environment and on humans as well. Recently, residents of Pasir Gudang in Johor were heavily affected when the Kim Kim River was heavily polluted with chemical waste as a result of improper toxic waste dumping.

### ■ A Timely Intervention

However, timely government intervention is on its way to stop this. One major step was taken back in October 2018, when the Malaysian government decided to end the issuance of licences for importing plastic waste into the country in order to reduce the amount of solid waste here.

According to the Minister of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change, Yeo Bee Yin, plastic waste is now being brought in illegally into Malaysia from developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Australia, the United States and Germany. This has caused the government to clamp down hard on companies that are importing solid waste into the country.

According to Yeo, Malaysia is a signatory of the Basel Convention, which requires foreign nations to reclaim their solid waste. The Basel Convention touches on cross-border control of the disposal of toxic and dangerous material. The Malaysian government seeks to work closely under the Basel Convention in order to compel the countries of origin to take back their waste and bear the cost of import themselves.

Another tricky problem arising from the issue of improper waste disposal is that the government seeks to tackle the emergence of illegal factories. These factories merely burn the solid waste instead of properly disposing of it. Since January, a total of 148 plastic recycling plants nationwide, which included illegal ones as well as those who failed to comply with the Environmental Quality Act 1974, were shut down by the Ministry of the Environment.

The Selangor state government has taken extensive steps over the years to deal with waste management. One of the steps taken was the appointment of KDEB Waste Management in 2016 to manage waste in Selangor. KDEB employs a smart waste management system that utilizes technology such as the AVLS system, CCTVs, Centralised Command Centres, the i-Clean Selangor application, high-tech compactors, and road sweepers to manage waste.

In addition, the Selangor state government has also banned the use of plastic bags completely since 2017. In 2010, the state government began implementing a 'No-Plastic Bag Day' every Saturday but has since extended this to a complete ban on plastic bags in the state in an effort to reduce plastic waste.

### ■ What Do We Do Now?

All things considered, we do not have much time to fix our waste management issue. Although our government is working hard to find a solution for our waste problem, will there be enough time for us to fix the problem before we begin to drown in trash like Hong Kong?

While there is a lucrative business in managing waste from other countries, we should focus on our own domestic waste first. The first step is the separation of plastic waste before we send our waste for disposal. If we do this, it will be a huge step forward in changing our nation and its waste habit.

It may be a long journey but every journey must begin somewhere. For the sake of our future, it must begin now.





## Economists: Unfair to Judge PH Based on 1 Year Performance

**KUALA LUMPUR** - It is unfair to judge the Pakatan Harapan administration on the economic state of the country, say several economists.

They added that the current economic status of the country since the current administration took over is complicated, as there are many factors that contribute to the national economic outlook.

"You can't really judge whether the government has performed well post-G14 based on the economic outlook, as it depends on global and regional changes," said Malaysian Institute of Economic Research executive director Datuk Zakariah Abdul Rashid.

"For example, Malaysia cannot influence the price of crude oil or control the trade war between China and the US," he said.

Zakariah also said the country's economic fundamentals remain stable and that Malaysia was still producing a trade surplus.

He added that the current government also had to work to deal with issues that had been left by the previous government.

"I would say the economic problem is overwhelming but not because of PH. This is because the problem has accumulated for many, many years"

**I would say the economic problem is overwhelming but not because of PH. This is because the problem has accumulated for many, many years**

- Malaysian Institute of Economic Research executive director, Datuk Zakariah Abdul Rashid.

Another economist, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Vice Chancellor, Tan Sri Noor Azlan Ghazali, said PH had to contend with many economic challenges but applauded its move to rationalize several subsidy programmes.

"I like the idea of the government continuing the rationalization of subsidies. This is to ensure that the people who are supposed to receive such help will [continue to] be able to do so," he said, stating further that such moves would deter benefit cheats.

## Leaders Should Fix Economy not Debate on National Debt Amount

**F**ormer Minister of International Trade and Industry, Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed, said the issue on the actual amount of the national debt that has been disputed in the Dewan Rakyat frequently has to be addressed and resolved soon, instead of just being debated continuously.

Mustapa, who chairs the parliament's Special Select Committee on the Budget, said that the committee has suggested tabling a report in parliament for the controversy to be concluded.

"The committee has discussed two matters, and one of it is the national debt, specifically on the actual amount of the debt."

"In the *Dewan Rakyat*, this issue is much debated, often-times there is a dispute as to whether the amount is over RM 1 trillion or otherwise."

"This debate has no end, it is unproductive and will affect our focus to tackle other economic challenges in an increasingly complex and challenging environment," he told a Malay



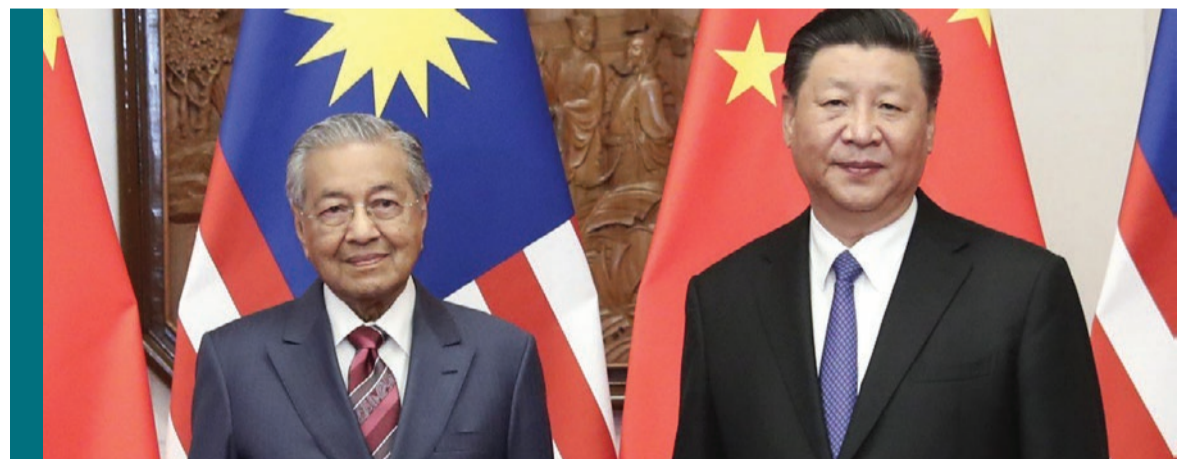
daily in an interview that was published today.

The committee is to engage with corporate figures and economists to get their views on efforts to strengthen Malaysia's economy. The committee will meet with stakeholders and relevant parties to get their input for Budget 2020 in order to place the nation on a solid foundation.

He added that the committee, which is made up of seven members, including represen-

tatives from the opposition, is one of Pakatan Harapan's reform efforts to enable members of parliament to play an active role in formulating the country's policies and monitor their implementation.

"Before this, many of the policies were formulated by the Cabinet and the federal government but now the MPs are given a role to provide input to the government and contribute to the country," said Mustapa.



## Malaysia Benefits from China's Capital Investment of USD 43.8 billion

**M**alaysia has been a major beneficiary of Chinese capital with investment totalling USD 43.8 billion (RM 181 billion) over the past 10 years, according to Knight Frank's 'New Frontiers: Prospects for Real Estate Along the Belt and Road Initiative' report released recently.

Knight Frank said the report was aimed at helping investors and occupiers understand potential opportunities that China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) could generate beyond

its borders.

Commenting on the impact of BRI in Malaysia, Allan Sim, executive director of capital markets at Knight Frank Malaysia said Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir's recent visit to China has spurred the confidence of Chinese investors to return to Malaysia.

Following the change of government in May 2018, a number of Chinese investments and projects, especially mega infrastructure projects, had been deferred.

**Following the change of government in May 2018, a number of Chinese investments and projects, especially mega infrastructure projects, had been deferred.**





# Coping with World Bank-Led Financialization

By  
**Jomo Kwame Sundaram,  
Anis Chowdhury**

**T**he World Bank has successfully promoted its 'Maximizing Finance for Development' (MFD) strategy by embracing the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, internationally endorsed in September 2015.

It has also secured support from the G20 of the 20 biggest economies, and effectively pre-empted alternative approaches at the third UN Financing for Development summit in Addis Ababa in mid-2015.

As the 'main show in town', developing countries will need to address the MFD's implications by responding proactively and collectively to address the new challenges this strategy poses.

## ■ Managing New Macro-Financial Challenges

As the MFD agenda privileges foreign investors and portfolio inflows, multilateral development banks (MDBs) should be obliged to clearly show how developing countries will benefit.

Greater vulnerability and other adverse implications as a result of being more closely integrated into fickle global financial markets, which detract from the ostensible advantages of such integration, are now widely acknowledged.

The IMF and other international financial institutions (IFIs) should also advise on the efficacy of various policy instruments, such as macroprudential measures, including capital controls, to ensure central bank control of domestic credit conditions.

Although portfolio flows are generally recognized as pro-cyclical, IFIs reluctantly recommend capital controls, and even then only after governments have exhausted all other monetary and fiscal policy options.

After experiencing repeated boom-bust cycles in capital flows, many emerging markets have learnt that they must manage such flows if they are to reap some benefit from financial globalization while trying to minimize risks.

## ■ Addressing Systemic Risks

In fact, many concerned economists believe that monetary and fiscal policies cannot adequately address such systemic fragilities but may inadvertently exacerbate them, for example, raising interest rates may attract more capital inflows, instead of just stemming outflows.

After effectively eschewing capital controls for decades despite its Article VI provisions, recent IMF advice has been inherently contractionary by raising interest rates and tightening fiscal policy instead of judiciously using 'smart' capital controls.

Development-oriented governments must include those familiar with changing securities and derivatives markets, who will have to work with central banks on regulating cross-border flows and managing systemic vulnerabilities.

It is difficult for development-oriented governments to be pragmatic and agile when they are subject to the dictates of private finance, especially when these appear to be rule-based, anonymous and foreign.

Financial systems are increasingly being reorganized around securities markets dominated by transnational institutional investors who have transformed financial incentives and banking business models.

Many banks have reorganized themselves around securities and derivative markets where short-term profit opportunities are significantly higher than traditional alternatives requiring costly nurturing of long-term, 'information-intensive' relations.

## ■ Stopping Capital Outflows from Developing Countries

International financial liberalization has enabled further capital outflows from most developing countries, depriving them of much-needed resources to develop their economies.

The economic fiction that open capital accounts would result in needed net financial flows from 'capital-rich' developed economies in the North to 'capital-poor' developing countries in the South has been disproved.



To minimize abuses and to protect the public interest, MDBs should instead ensure the transparency and accountability of the framework by making clear the likely fiscal and other costs, including opportunity costs of de-risking projects.



Thus, a significant share of the money flowing into global shadow banking (institutional investors, asset managers) comes from developing countries. Such capital outflows are typically due to tax arbitrage and avoidance practices by transnational corporations and wealthy individuals.

There is also considerable capital flight by those who have accumulated wealth by corrupt and other dubious means. The illicit sources of such riches encourage storing such wealth abroad.

Effective cooperation to check and return such ill-gotten gains—often syphoned out using illicit means, such as trade mispricing and other forms of money laundering—can go a long way.

Equitable international tax cooperation would increase financial resources available all round, especially to developing-country governments.

Instead, the IMF and others should enable developing-country authorities to effectively implement policies to more successfully mobilize domestic financial resources for investment in developing economies.

## ■ Ensuring Transparent Government Guarantees and Subsidies

The MFD approach seeks to commit fiscal resources to 'de-risking' securities and other financial instruments to attract foreign institutional investments.

It is thus re-orienting governments to effectively guarantee profits for private investors from financing development projects, effectively reducing public financial resources available for development projects.

To minimize abuses and to protect the public interest, MDBs should instead ensure the transparency and accountability of the framework by making clear the likely fiscal and other costs, including opportunity costs of de-risking projects.

Public interest agencies, civil society organizations and the media should help governments closely monitor such costs and make the public fully aware of the costs and risks involved.

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### Excerpt:

Visit this story at

[ipsnews.net/2019/04/coping-world-bank-led-financialization](https://ipsnews.net/2019/04/coping-world-bank-led-financialization)



**Jomo Kwame Sundaram**, a former economics professor and United Nations Assistant Secretary-General, was a member of the new Malaysian Government's Council of Eminent Persons.



**Anis Chowdhury**



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