



*Let us embrace the concept of sacrifice in honor of our nation's 62nd Merdeka day. With sacrifice and a little courage, we can turn Malaysia into a better nation.*



Amirudin Shari  
Selangor Menteri Besar

# SELANGOR JOURNAL



## Merdeka: Celebrating a Nation

**N**estled between the Straits of Malacca and the South China Sea, our nation has long been the meeting place for traders and travellers from all over the world. Due to its strategic position, traders from the West have no other choice but to travel along the narrow straits to avoid the torrential monsoons in Indian Ocean, thus resulting in Peninsular Malaysia—back then still just the Malay Peninsula—to be the meeting point for traders from the west and the east. **Story continues on Page 4**

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The sacrifice of the comfort of family, property and the motherland for the greater struggle should be learned by the people today

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### Sabak Bernam: District of Many Trades

**S**abak Bernam is both a district as well as a parliamentary constituency in northwestern Selangor, covering an area of 997 square kilometres.

**Story continues on Page 8**



## IPR Alignment to Cultivate Value of Shared Prosperity

**SHAH ALAM** — The re-alignment of the Inisiatif Peduli Rakyat (IPR) scheme enables Selangor to incorporate the value of shared prosperity among the public, as had been encouraged by Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said Selangor was known as the state that has cared for its people for the past 10 years by creating 42 programmes that have benefitted the people of Selangor from all walks of life.

“The government wants to focus on people with needs, not just the low-income households, but also those in the middle-class group,” said Amirudin.

“Among the elements that need boosting are education and entrepreneurship,” he added.

Amirudin said this during the ‘Spreading Selangor Economic Prosperity’ talk at a television station on 27 August.

At the same time, Amirudin said he had decided to re-balance the IPR grant as there was a group that he did not see as suitable to receive the initiative.

“For example, the free water initiative is very valuable to the underprivileged but it is certainly not fair for high-income groups to also receive this as they can afford it,” he said.

Amirudin added that when it comes to shared prosperity, Selangor is already in the lead.

Last August, the Selangor Government announced the restructuring of IPR involving eight schemes.

Among these eight were the Kasih Ibu Smart Selangor, Peduli Sihat, Tabung Warisan Anak Selangor, Bekalan Air Percuma, Mesra Usia Emas, Kesihatan Wanita, Bantuan Sihat Selangor, and the Rumah Selangorku schemes.

## MB reminds Muslims to learn from Prophet's Hijrah



All Muslims in Selangor are reminded to appreciate and learn from the events of the *Hijrah* (Emigration) of the Prophet Muhammad in search of a better life, says Selangor Menteri Besar.

Dato' Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari said the Prophet's *Hijrah* event with his companions from Mecca to Medina opened a new light on Islamic preaching and development.

“The cries of the *Muhajirin* (emigrants) from the City of Mecca were heartbreaking, and they put their lives

in a series of displacements or *Hijrah* while under oppression from the Abu Jahal-led *Musyrikin* (unbelievers).

“The sacrifice of the comfort of family, property and the motherland for the greater struggle should be learned by the people today,” he said in a message in conjunction with Maal Hijrah 1441—marking the beginning of the new Islamic year—today.

Amirudin said it was also urgent to continue to be united, friendly and willing to sacrifice in defence of the unity, stability and harmony of our beloved Malaysia.

Noting that Malaysia had just celebrated its 62nd Independence Day, he reminded that the experience of Malaysians' forefathers in struggling against colonizers in the past could be likened to the migration of the Prophet and his companions to Medina in search of a better life.

## MB: Appreciate the Concept of Sacrifice

The State Government does not deny the rights of the people but instead considers the long-term effects of future generations.

In his Merdeka speech, Dato' Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari said that it was not responsible for the administration of the State Government to spend all the produce alone for the people at this time.

He said it would have been more irresponsible if the same people still had the same benefits even though they were no longer eligible.

“With the cooperation of the Federal Government, some of the previous aid overlaps could be adjusted so that the right recipients could benefit from the sums in their favour. No more or less; everyone gets enough.

“It is important, therefore, to state here that this administration does not want to deprive the people of the state's outcomes but what we want is targeted aid, not a huge aid box to help anyone regardless of

their socioeconomic background,” he said in his Merdeka speech today.

At the same time, Amirudin said it was evident that the people of Selangor were affected by the reorganization but he called for everyone to sacrifice because the allocation was not abolished, but instead it was shifted to those who would need.

“There is no independence without sacrifice. There is no sacrifice without the struggle. There is no struggle without courage.

“Your sacrifice means that others who need it the most will benefit from the state revenue. Because of our sacrifice today, our future grandchildren will be able to lead a better life,” he said.

He said the stability and prosperity enjoyed today was the commitment of the Malaysian people who love peace.

“Therefore, let us appreciate the concept of sacrifice in conjunction with the 62nd Independence Day, and hopefully we can make Malaysia better,” he said.

## Selangor Hopes to Host Sukma 2022, Commonwealth Games 2026

**SUBANG JAYA** — Selangor intends to host the Malaysian Games (SUKMA) in 2022 after last hosting it in 1998.

Selangor Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari, said that with the status of nine-time champion, Selangor is intensifying its efforts to prepare athletes for SUKMA 2020 in Johor.

“The success of organizing the Selangor International Sports Summit (SISS) 2019 is a testimony to our seriousness and willingness to face the bigger challenge of SUKMA,” said Amirudin.

“As the top two-time world champion overall, we are ready to face SUKMA next year,” he added.

He said this at the opening ceremony of SISS 2019 at Sunway Resort Hotel and Spa on 27 August.

According to Amirudin, Selangor has the potential to be the best organizer after 21 years based on the state's economic development, existing facilities and being the ‘game-changer’ in SUKMA's history.

He noted that Selangor had also dreamt of hosting the 2026 Commonwealth Games after Kuala Lumpur did so in 1998.

“The sport is organized at the Federal level; however Selangor intends to host it like Kuala Lumpur before,” he said.

“Other countries have done the same thing such as Seoul, South Korea and Atlanta, USA when hosting the Olympics,” he added.

At the same event, Amirudin also presented awards to the Asian Team and Athletes of 2018.

The Japanese women's soccer team was selected as the winner of the Asian Women's Team while the Qatar men's soccer team won the Asian Men's Team category.

South Korea's Tottenham Hotspur striker Son Heung-min was named the Asian Men's Athlete, while Indian boxer M C Mary Kom received the Asian Women's Athletic Award.

# SELANGOR JOURNAL

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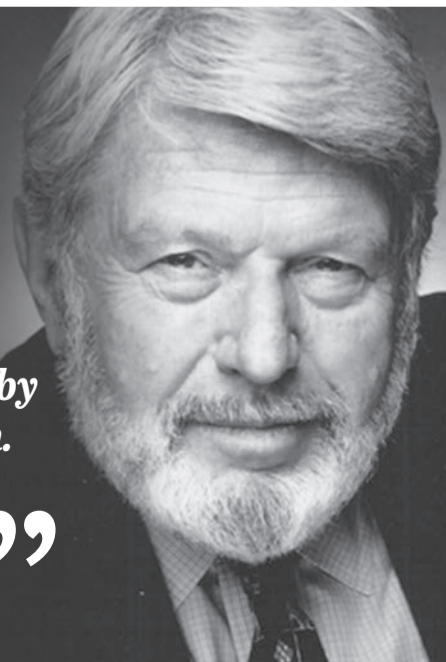
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“

*No doubt, unity is something to be desired, to be striven for, but it cannot be willed by mere declaration.*

Theodore Bikel

”





## SAY Aspire 2019 Selects 5 Local Selangor Companies



**PETALING JAYA** – NIQA (cleaning product), Palm Fiber (pharmaceutical industry), Potonguler (food and beverage), iLuvQuran (education) and CitarsaMilenium (food and beverage) have emerged as the five winners of SAY ASPIRE 2019 business pitch.

Following the announcement, Selangor Youth Community (SAY) Chief Operating Officer Dr Mohd Zulikhwan Ayub said he hopes this will help the companies (entrepreneurs) grow the business and be able to craft a personalized programme or intervention for their businesses.

“In SAY, we do not have a proper duration period of time, as long as they meet the outcome we offer to them, we are more than happy to work with them for a much longer period of time,” said Dr Mohd Zulikhwan.

“We set the outcome whereby they have to either increase the revenue by 20 per cent, get a high brand visibility, or to penetrate at least one overseas market. So, at the end of the day, what we want is to increase their sales and grow their business globally,” he said when met after the event.

Three months ago, a total of 154 Selangor companies applied for SAY ASPIRE and only 11 companies managed to go through the final stage before five companies were selected.

SAY ASPIRE is a business expansion programme for export ready companies to penetrate the overseas market through business expansion and export strategies with the final aim of being

global players.

Currently, SAY ASPIRE is targeting to penetrate Bahrain, Thailand and Brunei.

According to Dr Mohd Zulikhwan, the top five companies would receive access to the procurement teams, opportunity to pitch for investment, bespoke overseas market penetration trips with the main goal being export of products abroad, high brand visibility, collaborative networking, and personalized coaching and mentorship by seasoned entrepreneurs and industry experts.

Previously, all 11 entrepreneurs were given the five minutes to explain their business model, products and aspirations for entering foreign markets.

SAY founder, Selangor Crown Prince Tengku Amir Shah Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, was one of the judges who listened to the idea together with Co-Managing Partner of RHL Ventures Raja Hamzah Abidin, Chief Operating Officer of Segi Value Holdings Sdn. Bhd. Fong Leong, Malaysia's Largest Musang King Exporter Anna Teoh, Proficeo Chief Evangelist and Master Coach Dr Sivapalan Vivekarajah, Malaysia Global Innovation and Creativity Centre Chief Executive Officer Dzuleira Abu Bakar, and Senior Director of the Transformation and Digital Trade Division of Malaysia External Trade Development Cooperation AmranYem.

SAY ASPIRE is an initiative by Entrepreneurship Selangor under Selangor Youth Community in collaboration with Proficeo, Sunway Group and Menteri Besar Incorporated (MBI) Selangor.



## SARANG to Improve Economic and Development of Rural Areas

**KUALA SELANGOR** – The State Government is implementing SARANG, a comprehensive programme for rural development and economic development that features comprehensive guidance and facilitation.

Exco for Entrepreneur Development, Rural Development, Villages and Traditional Villages, Rodziah Ismail, said that Kuala Selangor was selected as a pioneer area for six months as of this August. The programme will benefit 55 villages and surrounding residents.

According to Rodziah, the aim of the programme is to revitalize the local village economy as well as to boost and diversify business activities especially in tourist-focused locations such as the Kampung Kuantan fireflies area.

“New and additional revenue potential can be generated through tourism promotion services, restaurants and seafood sales, accommodation, souvenirs and tourism crafts as well as village recreation that will benefit the participants of the programme,” she said.

“The state government intends for this programme to not only drive sustainable development of the rural areas but also to increase the level of income of the population without

having to migrate to the urban areas,” said Rodziah in a statement.

According to Rodziah, the effectiveness of the programme will be viewed in its entirety, especially in terms of return on investment, with the hope that it can be continued next year.

Rodziah noted that for next year, the state government plans to implement the programme in other districts and guide the implementation of this year's programme.

“The state government is committed to raise the average household income in Selangor to RM 6,000 a month by 2025, including rural areas, with such programmes,” she said.

“We are aware of the issues of physical infrastructure and the internet which are important needs in rural development,” she added.

“As such, the Rural Development Programme Steering Committee also established relevant government departments and agencies to ensure that infrastructure needs are met and appropriate actions are taken.”

Rodziah stated that through the pilot programme, the state government had targeted 200 participants around Kuala Selangor while another 50 participants are yet to be selected to participate in the programme.

## Selangorians to Enjoy Fresh Produce from Local Farms and Factories

**SHAH ALAM** – The state government has confirmed that no form of liquid has entered the river near the Rantau Water Purification Plant as there are 112 barrels of unidentified liquid placed near the plant.

Selangor residents will have the opportunity to obtain fresh agricultural products from farms and factories as eight permanent market sites are available with these products via the Selangor Agro Market (SAM) programme this September.

Exco for Infrastructure and Public Facilities, Modernization of Agriculture and Agro-based Industry, Ir. Izham Hashim, said that all market sites created in collaboration with the Federal Agricultural Marketing Authority (FAMA)



are open every Saturday and Sunday and offer a much cheaper price for fresh produce compared to outside markets.

“This is quite unique because we will not compete with the farmers' market, instead SAM has its own customers through new branding and tents apart from having a new site,” he said.

“Participants are required to conduct sale on the site while their products are sourced directly from the farm, other than that no intermediary is allowed to do business in the market,” he added.

Previously, the SAM programme started earlier last year involving the implementation of 87 locations in nine districts in Selangor, with sales of RM 5.2 million.

The programme offers a number of touch-point activities including direct sales of farm and farm-based products, offering between five to 25 per cent lower prices.

In addition, Ir. Izham said the implementation of the program was an approach to support the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sector in Selangor,

while ensuring that sales and marketing were in line with the development of other agricultural industries.

“Sometimes the crop is large but there is no place to market it, so we are thinking of equipping the chain so that the fresh produce from the farm and the act of reaching out to consumers at the outlet is convenient and practical to them,” he said.

It is understood that the objectives of the SAM programme are aimed at increasing the marketing network access to agropreneurs at the production level to increase revenue.

In addition, it is also a marketing plan to market agricultural produce in the event of dumping (seasonal fruits) in the market.



Tunku Abdul Rahman hailed the 'Merdeka' during the country's independence proclamation ceremony. This historic ceremony was witnessed by thousands of people who thronged Stadium Merdeka on 31 August 1957.



By  
Batrisyia Jay

Continued from cover page...

During that period of time, the area that would later become Malaysia was rich in the natural resources that were much sought after by the future colonial powers—from sought-after spices needed to preserve and flavour meat and other foods, to the tin required in industrial revolution-era Britain. This was what made the Malay Peninsula a coveted piece of land by many powerful forces around the world.

As we celebrate our nation's 62nd year of independence, Selangor Journal has decided to walk down memory lane on what Malaysia was like before Merdeka, how our country has successfully gained its independence through its continual interaction with foreign powers and influences and the nation that it has become today.

### ■ Early History

Early traders and travellers had many names for the peninsula. Ptolemy wrote about *Malaeu-kolon* and early Indian and Chinese sources mention a *Malai-ur* and *Ma-li-yu-er*, respectively. When the port of Malacca was founded in the 15th century, the port became one with the greatest number of traders passing through. Due to its booming popularity and strategic location, the much-coveted Malacca was invaded and seized by the Portuguese in 1511.

However, almost a century and a half later, the Dutch—in alliance with the Sultan of Johor—drove the Portuguese out of the peninsula. However, this was not the end of colonial influence in the area. Far from it, the Dutch intended to control the tin trade, for which they signed treaties with the Malay rulers of Kedah and Perak, and established an outpost on the island of Pangkor. The Dutch continued to vie with the British for the control of the Malay archipelago, with its important raw materials.

But the British gained a foothold in the region when, in 1786, the Sultan of Kedah approved for the island of Penang to be used as a trading post for the British East India Company.

In 1819, the British entered a treaty with the Sultan of Johor that enabled them to establish a trading post on the island of Singapore. Subsequently, the island was ceded to the British East India Company in 1824, the same year that Malacca was handed over to the British by the Dutch.

In the 1870s, the sultans of the various Malay states had begun to welcome advisers from the British empire, thus giving these advisers the leeway to slowly usurp much of the sultans' political power. In 1896, Negeri Sembilan, Perak, Selangor and Pahang were unified as the Federated Malay States—with Kuala Lumpur as the capital. The sultanates of northern Borneo which consisted of Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak had become British protectorates by then.

From 1941 to 1945, the nation was conquered by another powerful empire—the Japanese. The violent rule of the Japanese in the country was met with resistance from MCP-led guerrillas and almost tore the country apart with the ruthlessness that followed. However, following World War 2, British rule was reintroduced to the country.

However, the local populace had lost something of their awe of the European colonizers by then. The idea that they could rule themselves had been firmly implanted in their mind, with the Indonesian independence just after World War 2. More than ever, the Malayan people were determined to not let their country fall into another's grasp and

thus, this sentiment resulted in Malay nationalists rallying and campaigning for independence.

The Federation of Malaya that was created in 1948 after successful objection by the local population to the formation of the Malayan Union. It was this Federation that successfully obtained independence from the British in 1957, paving the way for the formation of our country, Malaysia.

“A sovereign, democratic and independent State founded on the principles of liberty and justice, and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and the maintenance of a just peace among all nations.”

Remembering the early patriots who advocated for Malayan independence is 75 year-old Anjalay A/P RM Suppiah, who witnessed the turning point of our nation while she was growing up. She remembers that most of these early patriots were upper-middle class people educated in the United Kingdom.

“I think that was why they were more open-minded than the rest of us and had the edge needed to push our country towards independence,” she remembers.

According to Anjalay, these citizens realized that

the best technique to achieve independence was to have a proper discussion with the colonial rulers of the country.

Much to the relief of the citizens, it was agreed that in order to fight the Communists, who had begun an insurgency, the country needed its independence—particularly as the Communists claimed that they were fighting to free the people of Malaya from the grasps of the British.

The delegation that negotiated Malaya's independence was spearheaded by the late Tunku Abdul Rahman, who would later become the first Prime Minister of the independent Federation of Malaya in 1957.

### ■ Merdeka!

31 August 1957 marked the first day of independence for the nation. Unlike other pro-independence uprisings in British colonies, our nation managed to gain its independence without violence or bloodshed. Due to the smooth transition of power, many were certain that the newly-formed country would continue to grow into a peaceful nation.

Thousands thronged to the new Merdeka Stadium in Kuala Lumpur to witness the once-in-a-lifetime ceremony where Tunku Abdul Rahman proclaimed Malaya “a sovereign, democratic and independent State founded on the principles of liberty and justice, and ever seeking the welfare and happiness of its people and the maintenance of a just peace among all nations”.

“There was a message from the Queen welcoming Malaya to the Commonwealth, and many other Commonwealth leaders had also sent their goodwill wishes,” reminisces Anjalay, who was there to witness history in the making at the Merdeka Stadium.

Anjalay said that she could clearly remember seeing the Union Jack being lowered as if it had taken place only yesterday, and gushed about the pride that had rushed through her as the Malayan flag was hoisted in its place.

At 11:58 p.m., remembers Anjalay, all lights were switched off and there was darkness up until the stroke of midnight, when the lights were switched back on and the Union Jack flag was lowered as the newly-made flag of Malaya was raised, while the new national anthem, the *Negaraku*, played in the background. “The newly-liberated country [came] alive with dances, concerts, fireworks and chants from its people,” she recalls.

Like Anjalay, 79-year-old Lim Kee Wei has been around to experience life before and after Independence. “I have lived through the British occupation and was given the opportunity to see my country achieve its independence,” says Lim, adding that he was extremely proud of the nation's progress throughout the years.

### ■ Birth of a Nation

The agreement that saw Singapore, Sarawak and North Borneo—with the exception of Brunei—becoming part of the Federation of Malaysia was signed in 1963 by the United Kingdom, Malaya, North Borneo, Singapore and Sarawak, with Singapore opting to leave the Federation two years later. Since then, our country has been known as ‘Malaysia’.

An amazingly diverse country with many different ethnicities, languages and religions, Malaysia is now home to approximately 22 million people where several ethnicities such as Malays, Chinese, Indians, Dayaks, Kadazans, Orang Asli and many other ethnic groups have lived together in harmony for the past 62 years.

To celebrate our nation's 62nd Merdeka, let us stand united and cultivate healthy relationships with our fellow countrymen as we reminisce about the sacrifices made by our forebears to achieve our nation's independence, and revel in the beauty and uniqueness that is Malaysia.





# Fun Facts About Merdeka

## The birth of the Malaysian Flag

The Malayan flag was designed by an architect named Mohamad Hamzah who worked with the Public Works Department in Johor. Selected out of hundreds of entries in a contest, the original design had only 11 stripes and a five-pointed star. The flag of the Federation of Malaya was modified to include the new states of Singapore, Sarawak and Sabah when Malaysia was formed. The number of stripes and points on the star in the flag was increased to 14. This is the same design as the Jalur Gemilang that we know today. When Singapore left the Federation in 1965, the number of stripes and points on the star on the flag remained the same. These later represented the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. Today, the fourteenth stripe and point represent the federal government in general, for the three Federal Territories of Kuala Lumpur, Labuan and Putrajaya.

## The declaration of the date of Independence

You probably have seen that famous picture of Tunku Abdul Rahman holding a 100-year old *keris pukal*. But did you know that this picture was taken when Tunku actually announced the date of independence on 20 February 1956 at Padang Bandar Hilir in Melaka? Tunku thought it was appropriate that Melaka was to be the place to proclaim the intended date for the proclamation of independence, as the state was where the Western colonization first began. The *keris* was given to him by a representative of the women's wing.



## Hari Merdeka and Hari Malaysia

Hari Merdeka, also known as Hari Kebangsaan, refers to the day the Federation of Malaya officially declared its independence from the British Empire on 31 August 1957. On the other hand, Hari Malaysia commemorates the formation of Malaysia on 16 September 1963, when Sabah and Sarawak joined the Federation of Malaya.

## "Merdeka! Merdeka! Merdeka!"

We tend to think that Tunku Abdul Rahman made this call only three times. In actual fact, he shouted "Merdeka!" for a whopping seven times in the newly-built Stadium Merdeka. Truly a celebration of our independence!



## The "Negaraku" is based on a state anthem

At the time of Independence, Malaysia did not have a national anthem. Tunku Abdul Rahman decided to organize a worldwide competition to find a suitable national anthem for Malaysia. Although there were 512 entries, none were deemed suitable. In the end, Tunku opted to use the Perak State anthem, titled "Allah Lanjutkan Usia Sultan", as the national anthem. Tunku wrote the new lyrics for "Negaraku" in collaboration with a panel of jurors.



## The National Flower

After receiving independence in 1957, the nation needed a national flower to symbolize her identity. In 1958, the Ministry of Agriculture sought proposals for a national flower from all state governments. Seven flowers were proposed. In 1960, after careful consideration, the ministry selected the hibiscus due to its eye-catching, large-sized red petals and the fact that it blooms throughout the year.



## The Malaysian flag finally gets a name

On 31 August 1997, the Malaysian flag was officially named 'Jalur Gemilang' after 40 years of being without a name. Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who was the nation's fourth Prime Minister at the time, made the announcement at midnight in conjunction with the 40th anniversary of the country's independence.

### THE CRESCENT AND THE STAR

Representing Islam as the national religion of the nation.

### 14-POINT STAR

Represent the unity of 13 member states and one federal territories

### THE YELLOW OF THE STAR AND CRESCENT

Symbolises the royal colour of the Malay rulers.

### RED COLOUR

Symbolises courage

### DARK BLUE COLOUR

Symbolises the unity of the Malaysian people with different races.

### WHITE COLOUR

Symbolises purity & grandeur



To commemorate our 62nd Merdeka Day and in conjunction with the upcoming Malaysia day, the Selangor Journal team went down to ask the people of Malaysia of what it means to be a Malaysian and the hopes and dreams they have for our country. Here is what they have to say:

**Masma Adha 33 | Engineering**

**What does being Malaysian mean to you?**  
Being Malaysian means embracing our national culture, language and diversity, living in harmony where people are fair, kind and respect each other regardless of the differences.

**What is your favourite thing about Malaysia?**  
Diversity of culture and ethnicities. Different food, place, unique culture and beliefs and also every year, we have various of beautiful and colourful celebrations.

**Hopes for the country**  
My hope for this country is that people from all races must realize that only by working together towards unity to solve problems will our future improve. Together, we must stand strong and build Malaysia as one of the countries that have different ethnicities that live happily and in harmony.

**Diana 23 | Writer**

**What does being Malaysian mean to you?**  
I have always been proud to be a Malaysian because of our rich, diverse heritage that you can't find anywhere else in the world.

**What is your favourite thing about Malaysia?**  
Some people might think Malaysians are divided due to several unfounded reasons, such as race, which may be true to a certain extent. However, one wrong move against one of us results in the union of all races and I think it's beautiful and somehow identical to the relationship of a real family where we may fight with each other but we will also fight for each other.

**Hopes for the country**  
I hope that from now on, Malaysia will only move forward. And I hope in the near future, Malaysia will finally be free of corruption, especially kleptocracy and racial/religious issues. We should embrace our diversity and differences to complement each other and move as one.

**Azhan Nordin 26 | Businessman**

**What does being Malaysian mean to you?**  
Being a Malaysian is when we enjoy eating at the same restaurant with other races and do not feel threatened or discriminated. Being a Malaysian is when all races cheered for Dato' Lee Chong Wei during his competition. Being a Malaysian is when no matter where we go, we will all miss Malaysian food, Malaysian festivals and Malaysian weather (although it's hot). What makes us Malaysian is when we still help each other and respect each other regardless of race.

**What is your favourite thing about Malaysia?**  
The beauty of local food, cultural diversity and tremendous number of celebrations.

**Hopes for the country**  
My hope for Malaysian is unity. United we stand, divided we fall. We Malaysians also support each other, paying no attention to small details such as gender, age, race or religion. And when the time comes, we plant our feet down and stand strong on our motherland, protecting our peace and serenity from those who plans to soil it. Because we are Malaysians.

**Zafrah 31 | Teacher**

**What does being Malaysian mean to you?**  
Being Malaysian to me is having the perks of enjoying various type of food, people, festival and culture. This makes my country is the best from others. I got to enjoy all that just by being a Malaysian. I get to understand different kind of culture and beliefs while having respect for them all. Apart from that, it gave me the sense of flexibility in adapting in various kinds of environment, this is a plus point when you work or travel to different parts of the world.

**What is your favourite thing about Malaysia?**  
Food! You can get almost everything here. Just name what are you craving for, you'll surely find it!

**Hopes for the country**  
My hope for Malaysia is that it will continue to strive on being united through all the races regardless of your views on certain things. When we are united as one Malaysia, we can overcome the obstacles ahead and also to stay resilient. Lastly, I hope we can enhance more activities that can cultivate the spirit of unity for all Malaysians.



## Less Absolute Poverty in Sarawak



**SARIKEI** — Chief Minister Datuk Patinggi Abang Johari Tun Openg stated that Sarawak has reduced the rate of absolute poverty among its people, including those who live in the rural areas.

Based on a United Nations report which said the percentage of low-income earners in Sarawak is higher than the national-level figure, the Chief Minister said the methodology used to measure the poverty rate should be checked.

“GDP is gross total income divided by population. But what we want to know now is real poverty and absolute poverty. As for absolute poverty, we have decreased it,” he said.

Patinggi Abang Johari said this at the ‘A Dinner with Community’ event in Sarikei.

He explained that absolute poverty means that a person has nothing but the people in rural Sarawak have land, which is an asset.

“They do not have high income because they have yet to monetize their assets. Why can’t they monetize their assets... because they lack knowledge. That is all,” he said.

For this reason, the state government is underlining the importance of education because through education people gain knowledge on how to transform or monetize their assets into production.

It was reported by a national English daily on Wednesday that a UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights Issues, Philip Alston, compiled a report which said the percentage of low-income earners in Sarawak is higher than the national-level figure.

At the national level, 8.8 per cent of households in Malaysia have a monthly income of less than RM 2,000.

According to the report, the situation is more dire in certain states. It stressed that in Sarawak, 15.5 per cent of households have a total family monthly income of less than RM 2,000.

## Bank Negara Likely to Cut Key Rate Again

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Bank Negara is likely to cut its key interest rate again this year if the United States Federal Reserve (Fed) further eases its monetary policy amid uncertain global economic growth, according to Malayan Banking Berhad (Maybank).

Group president and CEO, Datuk Abdul Farid Alias, said the central bank is likely to cut another 25 basis points off its overnight policy rate (OPR) this year to 2.75 per cent, which would help to boost private consumption.

“The government has mentioned that we still have plenty of tools to respond to any slowdown in the global economy and one of it is the key interest rates,” said Abdul Farid.

“What we anticipate is for rates to be cut further, not only in Malaysia but in countries around the region,” he added.

He said this at a press conference to announce Maybank’s first-half financial performance.

Earlier this month, the Fed lowered its interest rate to a range of 2 per cent to 2.25 per cent for the first time since the global financial crisis in 2008.

Its chairman Jerome Powell noted that weak global growth and the trade war between the US and China has been disruptive to the world economy and growth within the US, despite the US labour market improving.

Meanwhile, Abdul Farid pointed out that while a cut in the OPR would impact Maybank’s net interest margins, he



estimated it would encourage businesses and consumers to spend more, which would boost the economy.

The country’s biggest banking group by assets is also adopting a cautious approach in the second half of the year, especially on the external factors.

“Domestically, there is more clarity in some infrastructure projects which would boost demand from the corporate side,” Abdul Farid said.

For the first half of the year, Maybank’s overall loan growth was at 4.6 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y), which was the same rate as a year earlier. The bank’s stronger loans were contributed by its three home markets—Malaysia (4.2 per cent), Singapore (2.3 per cent) and Indonesia (6.1 per cent).

Abdul Farid noted that the loan growth for 2019 in Malaysia is forecast at 4.7 per cent y-o-y, driven by the revival of major infrastructure projects and government development

spending.

Meanwhile, the bank’s deposit growth for the first half grew 3.9 per cent compared with 5.5 per cent a year earlier.

As for its performance in the second quarter to end-June, Maybank posted a marginal decline in net profit to RM 1.94 billion compared to RM 1.96 billion in the same quarter last year. This came on a 13.4 per cent jump in revenue to RM 13.05 billion from RM 11.51 billion previously.

Its gross impaired loans ratio for the period stood at 2.01 per cent, which was higher than the 1.81 per cent posted in the second quarter of last year.

Maybank’s pre-tax profit for the quarter rose 1.6 per cent to RM 2.65 billion on the back of a 1.2 per cent rise in net operating income and a 19.6 per cent decline in net impairment losses.

For the first half of the year, Maybank’s earnings fell 2 per cent to RM 3.75 billion from RM 3.83 billion. On the other

hand, revenue grew 12.5 per cent or RM 3 billion to RM 26.03 billion compared with RM 23.02 billion previously.

Maybank has declared a dividend of 25 sen per share, payable within three months.

On a quarter-on-quarter basis, Maybank said the second quarter also recorded a stronger earnings growth momentum compared with the first quarter. This resulted in pre-tax profit advancing by 8.2 per cent quarter-on-quarter.

“Net profit also came in 7.3 per cent higher, boosted by a 10.9 per cent rise in net fee-based income arising mainly from better investment and trading income,” it said.

Maybank chairman Datuk Mohaiyani Shamsudin said the better momentum in the second quarter was achieved despite the challenging operating environment globally.

“We are also optimistic that there would be better business opportunities in the second-half of the year, driven by the measures being put in place by governments regionally to stimulate growth and boost consumer spending.”

On the bank’s digital initiatives, Abdul Farid revealed that in line with the global trend, Maybank is exploring the digital banking space in the region.

“Digital banking is no longer just an idea, it’s a reality,” he said.

He said in terms of licensing, Maybank could launch its own digital banking, however, the bank would need to explore other opportunities to stay ahead of the curve.

## ASM 2 Wawasan to Pay RM 1.06bil to Unit Holders



**KUALA LUMPUR** — Amanah Saham Malaysia 2 Wawasan (ASM 2 Wawasan) will pay out a total of RM 1.06 billion in income distribution to 883,049-unit holders who currently hold 21.60 billion units.

Amanah Saham Nasional Bhd. (ASNB) had declared an income distribution of five sen per unit for its fixed price fund ASM 2 Wawasan for the financial year ending 31 Aug 2019.

A wholly-owned unit trust company of Permodalan Nasional Bhd. (PNB), ASNB said ASM 2 Wawasan recorded a net income of RM 760 million for the first 11 months of its financial year as at 31 July.

It said the subdued local stock market performance was impacted by external and global factors.

Due to the highly volatile challenging domestic and glob-

al financial markets, Tan Sri Dato’ Sri Dr Zeti Akhtar Aziz—Group Chairman of Permodalan Nasional Berhad—said that PNB is focused on strengthening its resilience.

According to Zeti, PNB remains firmly committed to its mandate to enhance the economic wealth of the Bumiputera community and Malaysians through sound investments, which it believes would ensure sustainable returns for the long term.

Since the beginning of the financial year of ASM 2 Wawasan, the 30-stock FBM KLCI has fallen by 10.16 per cent from 1,819.66 at 31 Aug, last year to 1,634.87 on 31 July this year.

As of 31 July 2019, ASM 2 Wawasan generated a total gross income of RM 979.5 million, with profit from sale of

shares contributing RM 231.05 million or 24 per cent.

Dividend income from investments in listed and non-listed companies amounted to RM 569.48 million or 58 per cent of total gross income, with the remaining RM 178.98 million or 18 per cent from investments in *sukuk*/Islamic fixed deposit as well as income from other fixed income instruments.

The computation of the income distribution for ASM 2 Wawasan is based on the average minimum balance held throughout the financial year of the fund.

The distribution declared by ASM 2 Wawasan will be re-invested as additional units into the accounts of the unit holders and will be automatically credited on 1 Sept 2019.



## Sultan Launches Women's and Children's Specialist Hospital



**SHAH ALAM** – Avisena Group has launched its Women's And Children's Specialist Hospital in the heart of Shah Alam. Avisena Women's and Children's Specialist Hospital is the first of its kind in Malaysia and is the largest private healthcare facility focusing on first-class

care and treatment for women and children, complete with a total of 133 beds and 52 specialist doctors.

The hospital was launched by Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Al-Haj Ibni Almarhum Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz

Shah Al-Haj, and was graced by Tengku Permaisuri Selangor, Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin and Raja Muda Tengku Amir Shah Ibni Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah.

Selangor Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari was also present at the launch.

Datuk Dr Omar Abd Hamid, Chairman and Group Chief Executive Officer of Avisena Group, said the hospital has received an overwhelming response from the public since it began operating in May 2019.

"Avisena Women's and Children's Specialist Hospital has not only been outfitted with the latest medical equipment and technology, it offers specialities in obstetrics, gynaecology and paediatrics in almost all specialisations such as infertility, maternal-foetal medicine, urogynaecology, neonatology, paediatric cardiology, paediatric surgery, paediatric orthopaedic, paediatric oral health," he said.

Datuk Dr Omar said that Avisena Women's and Children's Specialist Hospital is currently in the final stage of setting up a state-of-the-art child development centre, providing services for

children with special needs.

These includes Audiologists, Speech Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Child Development Specialists, Clinical Psychologists, Dietitians, Play Therapists. The child development centre will be equipped with Snoezelen/Sensory Room. It is due to be launched before end of this year.

Together with Marriot Hotel, The Avisena Group will tap into the health tourism industry and attract tourists from Australia, Indonesia and the Middle East. Building a 250-bed hospital in the Klang Valley and expending to a few more locations outside Selangor are part of the future plan.

"We are confident that the project will promote medical tourism, and turn Shah Alam into a quality health services hub in Selangor and Malaysia," said Dr Omar.

Avisena Group currently owns a 118-bed hospital named Avisena Specialist Hospital located 200 metres away from its new women's and children's hospital.



## Inherited Elegance: Malaysian Traditional Costumes

Malaysia is a truly beautiful country with a blend of ethnicities, cultural diversity and rich history. This is reflected in the richness and variety of Malaysian women's traditional clothing. The wide range of beautiful clothes vary in design not only in terms of the ethnicity from which they originate but also from state to state. Sadly, some of these beautiful costumes are becoming more and more rarely worn. Perhaps it's time to revive some of these unique fashions?

### ◆ Baju Kurung and Kebaya labuh

The loose, flowy *baju kurung* is the traditional dress that has remained most popular among Malay women. It consists of a loose-fitting, approximately knee-length tunic worn over a long skirt. The popularity of the *baju kurung* can be ascribed to its suitability to Islamic clothing requirements for women. Women traditionally wore it with a head cover, such as the *kain kelubung* (a piece of sewn cloth that covered the head and a part of the upper body) or *selendang* (shawl). In more recent times, a *tudung* (headscarf) is worn to complete the outfit.

Another evergreen Malay traditional women's costume is the *kebaya labuh*. Originating from Johor-Riau, the *baju kebaya labuh* is a two-piece outfit with a long top that opens in front, usually worn during formal occasions. Though today *kebaya* blouses tend to be knee-length at most, the original *kebaya labuh* fell down to the ankles—*labuh* being the Malay word for 'long'. The look was usually completed with tiered linked brooches called *dokoh* worn over the front fastening.

### ◆ Puteri Perak Costume

The Puteri Perak costume is the traditional attire of the girls of Perak. This traditional costume is not only elegant but also unique because it is matched with pants instead of the usual *sarong*. The top has a high collar neck in the style of *cekak musang*, similar to men's *baju Melayu*. A *sampin* or wrap at the waist finishes off the look to add modesty. Today, the Puteri Perak costume is usually only worn by Perak-born brides.

### ◆ Cik Siti Wan Kembang's Attire

This outfit is based on the costume worn by the legendary Cik Siti Wan Kembang, a princess who ruled Kelantan. It is fashioned from three pieces of fabric: a lengthy silk piece wrapped around the chest like a *kemban*, a *songket sarong* and a shawl also made from *songket* fabric worn over the shoulder. To add to its charm, the costume is decorated with jewellery, belts, bangles and *cucuk sanggul* (decorative hair pins). While this traditional outfit has lost popularity

due to its 'revealing' style, perhaps some modifications can be made to revive for special occasions?

### ◆ Cheongsam

The cheongsam is a comfortable yet elegant piece of traditional worn by Chinese women. The term 'cheongsam' originates from the Cantonese language, and traditional dress is also known as *qipao* (long dress) in Mandarin. Traditionally, cheongsam were loose and worn with trousers underneath them. The elegant cheongsam that we know today—a long, figure-hugging dress with high side slits with frog closure buttons that run down from the neck to the upper side of the chest—originated in Shanghai and was popularized in the 1930s.

married with the local Malay community—the term 'peranakan' meaning locally-born. The women are often called 'nyonyas'. While the traditional costume most identified with this community is the *nyonya kebaya*—a short blouse made of thin material which is fastened with three *kerosang* or brooches and worn with a *batik sarong*—an older version of Peranakan women's dress was a long, loose, almost ankle-length blouse called the *baju panjang*, similar to the Malay *kebaya labuh*.

### ◆ Portuguese-Eurasian Dress

The Portuguese-Eurasian community of Malacca also has a traditional dress of its own. Dating back to the early 1500s, the Malaccan Portuguese traditional costume is reminiscent of European folk dress. Black and red dominate the colour scheme of these traditional costumes. The women wear



◀ Baju Kurung



◀ Nyonya Kebaya



▲ Saree

a broad aproned skirt with a vest under which a white blouse is worn. Traditionally, a head-cover is also worn.

### ◆ Saree

Being in existence for over 5,000 years, the Indian saree is considered to be among the world's most ancient forms of attire still existence. 'Saree' means "strip of cloth" in Sanskrit, an



continued from page 07

apt description as this dress is essentially a piece of cloth about 4 to 8 meters in length and 0.6 to 1.2 meters wide, which is wrapped around the body. The decoratively embroidered or printed end is left to drape over the left shoulder. Sarees are usually worn with a matching or contrasting choli, a tight-fitting midriff blouse with or without sleeves.

#### ◆ Kadazan Sinuangga And Tapi

The Kadazan women of Sabah tradi-

tionally wear short blouses called *sinuangga* and a wrap skirt called *tapi*. The *sinuangga*, which has a U-neckline, is usually made from black cotton, with silk or velvet used for ceremonial occasions. Red, yellow and cream embroidery lines the openings for the head and arms. Gold buttons are fixed all the way from the neckline to the midriff on costumes for ceremonial or formal occasions. This traditional costume is often accessorized with gold jewellery and a *tangkong* (hip belt), together with a *himpogot* belt made out of silver dollar coins.

#### ◆ Ngepan Indu Iban

*Ngepan Indu Iban* is worn by the Iban women of Sarawak. It has 11 components: *sugu tinggi* (silver headdress), *marek empang* or *tangu* which is worn around the neck and rests on the shoulders; *kain karap* or *kebat* (woven skirt), *lampit* (silver belt), *rawai* (silver corset), *tumpa pirak* or *bentuk* (silver bangles), *gelang kaki* or *gerunchung* (silver anklets), *buah pauh* (silver purse), *selampai* (beaded sash), *tali ujan* or *mulung* (silver chain), *sementing buchai* or *sengkiling* (a coin corset with dangling coins). The entire costume can weigh up

to 5kg and is worn during special occasions such as the *Gawai* festival.

#### ◆ Orang Asli Clothing

Traditionally living in the deep jungles of Malaysia, the Orang Asli sourced natural materials such as tree bark, grass and certain types of leaves for use as clothing. The tree bark is pulled apart to have a cloth-like texture, and leaf fronds are woven into complex patterns to make sashes and headgear. These traditional clothes are now mostly worn only for ceremonial occasions such as ritual dances or the Hari Moyang festival.



By  
Muhaimin Merican



**Sabak Bernam**  
Selangor

Sabak Bernam is both a district as well as a parliamentary constituency in northwestern Selangor, covering an area of 997 square kilometres.

It borders the state of Perak to the north, the district of Hulu Selangor to the east, the district of Kuala Selangor to the south, and the Straits of Malacca to the west.

In the past, the Sabak Bernam district had only four subdistricts or *mukim*, but it has since evolved into five *mukim* today: Bagan Nakhoda Omar, Panchang Bedena, Pasir Panjang, Sabak and Sungai Panjang.

The district is located at the northwestern corner of Selangor. It borders the state of Perak to the north, the district of Hulu Selangor to the east, the district of Kuala Selangor to the south,

## Sabak Bernam: District of Many Trades

**S**abak Bernam is both a district as well as a parliamentary constituency in northwestern Selangor, covering an area of 997 square kilometres.

and the Straits of Malacca to the west. The Bernam River forms its border with Perak.

Significant towns in Sabak Bernam district include Sabak, Sungai Besar and Sekinchan. It is the Selangor district that is farthest away from Shah Alam and Kuala Lumpur, located more than 100 kilometres away from both.

#### ■ Unique Name

According to what was gathered through generational storytelling and passing down of tradition, the name Sabak Bernam is derived from the phrase *sahabat berenam* which translates into 'six companions'.

According to the story, six friends had gone upstream of the Bernam River and found that there was a fallen tree blocking their path upriver. They cut up the tree and made their way up the river. Although the authenticity of this story is questionable and lacks official documentation, there is a significant little piece of evidence that seems to relate to these six companions, in that their graves can still be found today in specific areas all over the district.

All of them are believed to have died

in different places throughout the Sabak Bernam district. It is believed that they died at Ulu Bernam, Landu Beach, Seberang Kota, Sungai Lang or Tanjung Medan, Keranji and Kampung Kemboja beach, respectively. The reason for their arrival is unknown. However, one of the companions who arrived in Keranji is remembered as a hero for helping the villagers against the Achehnese who came to attack Keranji.

According to a different version of the story, the name Sabak Bernam is derived from a different event. In 1880, six former chiefs from Aceh and Sumatra, who had left their respective states and had come to the Peninsula to look for a new home. These six were leaders and nobles who were said to have fled a war in their homelands.

#### ■ Economy

The economy of the district of Sabak Bernam remains mainly similar to its traditional roots as almost 50 per cent of the land in the Sabak Bernam area is used for agricultural purposes. About 70 per cent of the population are farmers and fishermen.

The undoubtedly most famous agriculture produce from Sabak Bernam is rice. With rice fields stretching as far as the eyes can see, Sabak Bernam has a total area of 14,099 hectares of rice cultivation, accounting for 71 per cent of Selangor's total rice crop, and this allows it to provide the locals with a good source of income. There are also multiple rice factories located in Sabak Bernam where rice is milled and packaged before being shipped all over the country.

The area is also very well-known for the local palm oil plantations that make up a big part of the former countryside. These palm oil estates employ and provide locals with employment.

Moreover, due to the coastal nature of the area, its soil is suitable for coconut cultivation. Coconuts from Sabak Bernam are also shipped all over the country.

Other popular agricultural products that can be found in the plantations and farms in Sabak Bernam include cocoa, vegetables, and fruits.

Besides this, the coastal location of the district also makes fishing a popular economic activity. In fact, Sabak Bernam has the highest number of fishermen in Selangor over 3,000 people.

The geographical terrain of the dis-







district allows multiple types of fishing, including river fishing and deep-sea fishing. Towns like Sungai Besar and Sekinchan are famous for their seafood, with visitors from all over coming in to get a taste of fresh seafood straight from the sea.

Moreover, local tourism is on the rise in Sabak Bernam. Bringing forth the idea of ecotourism, the district is beginning to focus on creating quality recreational infrastructure. Homestays and fishing villages have become a focal point for tourism in Sabak Bernam.

Sabak Bernam has a total area of 14,099 hectares of rice cultivation.



Due to the coastal nature of the area, its soil is suitable for coconut cultivation. Coconuts from Sabak Bernam are also shipped all over the country.

Local Tourism

As there are plans underway by the state government to make the state's eco-tourism more accessible to locals and tourists alike, Sabak Bernam is considered to be one area with the most potential to highlight state tourism.

Some of the places in Sabak Bernam you should not miss to visit are:

Bagan Nakhoda Omar

The Bagan Nakhoda Omar Recreational Centre is situated at Bagan Nakhoda Omar beach. It is one of the recreational facilities that has been developed by the government to attract tourists to visit this district. It has become a favourite destination among those who love to enjoy the beauty of the beach as a part of nature.

Also, the jetty to the Paradise Resort Kelong is located in this area. This has made the Bagan Nakhoda Omar Recreational Centre a definite tourist spot in this district.



The coastal location of the district also makes fishing a popular economic activity. In fact, Sabak Bernam has the highest number of fishermen in Selangor over 3,000 people.



The Bagan Nakhoda Omar Recreational Centre is situated at Bagan Nakhoda Omar beach.



Not only is the town well-known for its grilled fish, it is also known for crabs, mentarang (a kind of clam), and other seafood.

The green of the surrounding rice fields against blue skies make for some instagram-worthy photos.



These homestays provide visitors with a taste of the kampung life in the quiet villages of the district.



Sekinchan

Fancy dining in a vintage bus? Or eating rice out of a piece of bamboo? You can do all this and more in Sekinchan.

Not only is the town well-known for its grilled fish, it is also known for crabs, mentarang (a kind of clam), and other seafood. Besides these, there are lots of other interesting dishes for you to try here. A bonus: the green of the surrounding rice fields against blue skies make for some instagram-worthy photos.

Masjid Jin

For those who enjoy the local legends and Malay folklore, the Masjid Jin (Jinn Mosque) is located in Kampung Panchang Bedena, about 8 kilometres from the town of Sungai Besar.

Multiple stories surrounding supernatural activities have been reported around the mosque area. The locals believe that the jinns do not disturb those who intent on praying.

The mosque also has unique architectural features. The wooden architecture and markings highlight the traditional Malay architecture of old at its finest.

The mosque has been placed under the supervision of the State Museum, where its uniqueness will always be preserved.

Masjid Jinn — the locals believe that the jinns do not disturb those who intent on praying.



Homestays

One of the biggest attraction that Sabak Bernam can offer is the various homestays that can be found throughout the district.

These homestays provide visitors with a taste of the kampung life in the quiet villages of the district. Also, tourists are allowed to stay with a family in their home and experience the daily life of the chosen community in local villages.

Surrounded by rice fields, rivers and fishing villages, the popular concept is said to be very popular with city folk and foreign tourists who are looking for a break from city life and get a taste of the serene and quiet kampung lifestyle.

According to Tourism Selangor, popular homestays in the district include Homestay Haji Dorani, Homestay Papi-tusulem and Homestay Air Manis.



# SELANGOR QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL

## RM 400,000 for Gombak disaster victims

The state government, through Selangor Menteri Besar Incorporated (MBI), has allocated RM 400,000 to residents of Gombak who were hit by the tropical cyclone before Aidil Adha.

Dato' Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari said, the Selangor Zakat Authority had also given RM 68,000 to the victims.

"We hope this assistance will reduce the burden on the people and hence the state government will coordinate the relief [efforts] of the Sabak Bernam people who have been affected by the recent disaster," said Amirudin.

He said this during the Sungai Tua State Legislative Assembly (DUN) Independence Day Celebration Program at Batu Caves Public Park.



## 2,000 Sungai Tua residents celebrate Merdeka with Menteri Besar

More than 2,000 people of various races including Malays, Chinese and Indians gathered to celebrate the Sungai Tua State Assembly (DUN) Independence Day celebration programme.

Members of the public were gathered as early as 8 a.m. to watch a parade of six contingents of 300 members including the Village Community Management Council (MPKK), Seri Selayang Secondary School, SM Selayang School, SJK Kheow Bin Batu Caves, SJK Tamil Batu Caves and Azmida College.

The programme began with a Jalur Gemilang a motorcycle and four-wheel drive vehicle convoy with Dato' Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari, who is also a member of the Sungai Tua State Assembly.

## Sultan of Selangor: Don't believe fake news

His Royal Highness the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah, warned the people not to believe in slander and fake news, especially on social media, trying to disrupt the peace and harmony of the nation.

He said the people should be tolerant and strive to understand each other to celebrate their cultural, cultural and religious differences. He reminded that in this way, Malaysians will live in an atmosphere of independence in the true sense.

Sultan Sharafuddin is optimistic that the celebration of National Day celebrated on 31 August each year will continue to inculcate the spirit of patriotism among the people, and instil a sense of love and compassion for the country in the hearts of all Malaysians.



## Tengku Amir attends tahlil ceremony and prayers

His Royal Highness Tengku Amir Shah, the Crown Prince of Selangor, today attended a *yasin*, *tahlil* and prayer ceremony held in conjunction with the 62nd anniversary of the Selangor State.

He arrived at the Sultan Salahuddin Mosque Abdul Aziz Shah Mosque here at 12.30 p.m. accompanied by the Secretary of the State, Dato' Mohd Amin Ahmad Ahya.

The reading of the surah Yasin and a *tahlil* was led by the imam of the state mosque, Muhammad Farhan Wijaya.

## MB: Listen to Voices of the Young

Steps should be taken to engage the post-Merdeka youth in order to better understand their needs and wants, Dato' Menteri Besar, Amirudin Shari has said.

He said the complaints of young people should also be heard, given the future of Selangor and Malaysia lie in the hands of this group.

"As long as we do not succeed in providing solutions to their problems, we will be seen as failing to look after the future of Malaysia as a whole," he said in a speech in conjunction with the Selangor State 62nd National Day Celebration, 2019.

## SLIM Selangor to be widened

The Selangor SLIM program, which began at the State Secretary's office in June, has received increasing public attention in Selangor.

Exco for Health, Welfare, Women and Family Empowerment, Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud, said the program would be extended to other departments and agencies of the State Government.

"Due to the good response, the programme will continue to involve other departments and agencies of the state government but in a place that is compatible with their respective locations," she said.



## 16% increase in MPSJ recycling rate

Recycling rates under the administration of the Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) increased by 16 per cent to mid-year through the 'Waste Wise Cities' campaign, compared to only 1.22 per cent in 2006.

Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) president, Noraini Roslan, said they had been working hard to increase recycling activities among the residents since the 'Waste Wise Cities' campaign was introduced on 1 March.

The 'Waste Wise Cities' programme was implemented following a campaign introduced by the agency under the United Nations (UN), the United Nations Human Settlement Program.

## Selangor records 56 births of Merdeka babies

A total of 56 babies were born today in conjunction with the 62nd Independence Day at a government hospital in Selangor, from 12 midnight to 8 a.m.

Selangor State Health Director Dato' Dr Khalid Ibrahim said the babies were born at Tengku Ampuan Rahimah Hospital in Klang, Selangor Hospital and Kajang Hospital.

"Of the 56 births 21 were boys and 35 were girls.

"Three of these were C-section births, with two sets of Malay twin boys safely born at Selayang and Kajang Hospital [respectively]."



# NATIONAL NEWS QUICK TAKES

SELANGOR JOURNAL



## Agong: Hijrah for a developed nation

Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah, today called on all Malaysians to emigrate to form a developed nation with a solid foundation of solidarity and harmony in conjunction with the Maal Hijrah 1441 celebration.

His Majesty said the move of the nation to a higher level would be achieved through the development of a spirit of tolerance and cooperation of multiracial people, which is the foundation of national unity.

"As we strive to make the pilgrimage to a more tolerant society and be imbued with love, let us not neglect the demands of religion and the law of God," he said in conjunction with the National Level Maal Hijrah Celebration rally here.

The Raja Permaisuri Agong, Tunku Hajah Azizah Aminah Maimunah, was also in attendance.

## Siti Zainon Ismail Named National Literary Laureate

Traditional arts researcher and writer Siti Zainon Ismail has been named the national literary laureate by the education ministry. She is the 14th person to be awarded the title.

Education Minister Maszlee Malik said Siti Zainon earned the award for her contributions to the development of Malaysia's national literature.

Siti Zainon's impact on spreading knowledge at the national and international levels, as well as her leadership in literary associations, are among other factors that won her the coveted recognition.

## Agong stops car to help accident victims

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah, descended from the official vehicle to check on an accident victim near the intersection of USJ on the ELITE highway.

His Majesty was reportedly on his way home after attending the 'Children of Malaysia Walk 2019' programme at Eco Arden in Setia Alam held on Merdeka Day.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong has previously shown his concern by stopping to check on accident victims on at least two other occasions.



## Agong joins the 'Children of Malaysia Walk 2019'

His Majesty Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah attended the 'Children of Malaysia Walk 2019' program held at Eco Arden in Setia Alam here today.

The arrival of Sultan Abdullah was welcomed by 'Children of Malaysia Walk' chairman Tan Sri Lee Lam Thye and Ecoworld Malaysia chairman Tan Sri Liew Kee Sin.

Also participating in the 300-metre walk were Economic Affairs Minister Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali, Federal Territory Minister Khalid Abdul Samad and Selangor Menteri Besar Amirudin Shari.



## Child with autism swims across Dinding Strait in honour of National Day

Despite having autism, Nur Dhia Izz Ashfadina Muhammad Asrie, 10, completed a 10-kilometre swim across the Dinding Strait here today in conjunction with Merdeka Day.

Nur Dhia Izz Ashfadina, known as Dhia, completed the swim that started from Pangkor Jetty and ended at Weldzone Jetty in Lumut in 3 hours 40.49 seconds.

The swim event, which began at 9 a.m., included nine other swimmers aged between nine and 18. 47 officers and members of the Royal Malaysian Navy (RMAF) attended the event.

Dhia, when met, said she was excited to finish the swim despite having to face waves and hot weather.

## TPM: We must reject disunity



Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said the people of the country needed to be mature in assessing the issues that could lead to a split.

She said there was no place in the Malaysian community for those who deliberately sowed seeds of disunity.

She said that unity and tolerance among the people is key to the nation's independence, and that cooperation and tolerance were the backbones of universal security.

## 448 traffic summonses issued on Merdeka eve



Six motorcyclists and a motorist were arrested while 448 traffic-related summonses were issued during a traffic ops on the eve of Merdeka in the capital.

Kuala Lumpur Traffic and Investigation Department chief ACP Zulkefly Yahya said that during the operations from 9.30 p.m. to 4.30 a.m. dubbed 'Ops Ambang Merdeka', summonses were issued for various offences such as licence plates not within specifications, illegal vehicle modifications, no sideview mirrors and not having a valid driving license. One of the arrested motorists was held for drunk driving.



## Tun M: Nationalism should not be stopped

While celebrating the 62nd National Day, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad hoped the people regardless of religion, race and culture would seek the spirit of nationalism that helped Malaysia achieve independence and develop it into a successful nation.

In a speech in conjunction with Merdeka Day 2019, the Prime Minister said Malaysia was built on values, mutual respect, respect, willingness to give and share, unselfish and willing to sacrifice for the sake of the country.

Without those values, Malaysia would not have grown into a developed nation capable of giving its people comfort and prosperity



## Housing Loan Approvals to Increase by 20%

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Following the easing of eligibility requirements for Bank Negara Malaysia's RM 1 billion Fund for Affordable Homes, Finance Minister Lim Guan Eng expects home loan approvals for first-time homebuyers to increase by at least 20 per cent.

Lim said this after the Budget 2020 focus group meeting.

According to Lim, the fund's extended repayment duration of 40 years—from 30 years previously—will help to reduce the monthly housing loan repayments of first-time homebuyers by 20 per cent.

Starting 1 September, the maximum monthly household income for applicants to the fund will be RM 4,360—up from RM 2,300 previously.

Meanwhile, the central bank has also raised the maximum property price from RM 150,000 to RM 300,000.

Moreover, successful applicants also have the opportunity to enjoy a low interest rate of 3.5 per cent per annum with a 40-year repayment duration.

They will also be exempted from stamp duty for their sales and purchase agreement as well as their financing agreement.



## Ease Financing Margin for Home Buyers

**SHAH ALAM** — S P Setia Bhd. hopes the government will make the financing process for first-time home buyers more affordable, especially for those looking to use the property for owner-occupation.

The margin of financing is imperative for buyers as it allows them to fork out a lower down payment when purchasing a property.

"The reduction in overnight policy rate (OPR) [by Bank Negara Malaysia recently] helped a bit in terms of our take-up rate, but the more important thing for buyers is the margin of financing, as most of them can afford the instalments," said S P Setia President and CEO, Datuk Khor Chap Jen.

"The biggest challenge for them is the down payment. If the margin of financing is less, it means that they have to pay even more for the down payment."

On the other hand, Khor hoped the threshold for foreign property buyers would be lowered to allow them to obtain property in Malaysia and help alleviate the property overhang.

"We appreciate the Government's efforts to clear some of the unsold units—which includes the Home Ownership Campaign (HOC)—but we are currently facing a property overhang, especially higher-priced properties," he said.

"For example, in Selangor, the current threshold is set at RM 2 million for the foreign buyers, and it should be lowered to maybe RM 1 million in line with all the other States. We have been receiving a lot of interest from foreign buyers and we should take advantage of that opportunity."

Meanwhile, instead of by the end of 2019, the proposed development project of S P Setia in Osaka, Japan will be launched in early 2020.

This is due to the fact that the development plans for the RM 1.8 billion project has just been approved and that the company is currently making the necessary preparations, such as submitting the project's detailed building plans.

The 1.98 ha integrated development project is a stone's throw away from Kansai International Airport and is situated next to a premium outlet mall.

"We are taking everything into consideration. Japan will be having the Olympics next year, so if we were to start construction now, it would be very expensive. So, we expect to launch [the project] early next year," said Khor.

"There is a lot of interest and queries because it is very convenient for those working in Kansai Airport," noted Khor.

## Affordable Housing A Shared Responsibility

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Decent affordable housing is fundamental to the health and well-being of the people and will also smoothen the functioning of economies. Yet in developing and advanced economies around the world, cities are struggling to meet that need.

Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) Governor Datuk Nor Shamsiah Mohd. Yunus stressed that affordable housing is a shared responsibility and that the government is looking at how infrastructure providers could play their part in reducing the cost of houses.

This is in line with the country's commitment to provide adequate and affordable housing for all income levels—particularly for the lower-income group.

"There are three components which make up the biggest proportion of the cost, namely land, construction and infrastructure," she said.

"There is a greater recognition now on the need to reduce costs. For land costs, the government is collaborating with the state government on mechanisms to reduce costs; and for construction costs, that is where the government is looking to leverage technology such as the IBS (Industrialised Building System) to bring down the cost," she added.

Based on the median multiple approach, a house is deemed to be unaffordable if it is priced more than three times the annual household income. Malaysia's is at 4.8 times.

"Let's take the B40 for example. With their median monthly income of RM 3,000, they can only afford houses up to around RM 108,000 which is three times their annual income," Nor Shamsiah noted.

"If you look at the 68 per cent of total unsold residential

units, they are [priced] above RM 300,000. That is why we also have to address the supply-demand mismatch.

"While there is demand for affordable housing, the developers are building outside the affordable reach of the majority of Malaysians," said Nor Shamsiah.

Recently, the central bank expanded the eligibility criteria for those seeking to purchase property under the BNM's RM1 billion Fund for Affordable Homes.

As of 1 Sept 2019, individuals planning to apply for financing to purchase affordable houses would be eligible to do so if they have a maximum monthly household income of RM 4,360, up 86 per cent from the earlier threshold income level of RM 2,300 per month.

Moreover, the maximum property price will be increased to RM 300,000 from RM 150,000. These new terms would help buyers from this income group to obtain financing to purchase their first house.

On the other hand, Nor Shamsiah repeated the importance of the Guidelines on Responsible Financing.

"The Guidelines on Responsible Financing is still relevant because the main objective of these guidelines is to ensure that borrowers are able to afford the loan and can benefit from it," she said.

"So, if a customer is taking the loan to buy a house, the customer should eventually own the house at the end of their loan tenure. Ultimately, the banks and the borrowers should also be responsible in the decision. It works both ways," she added.

The central bank's responsible financing guidelines are in place to protect the interest of borrowers by ensuring that those who borrow are within their capacity to honour the financial obligation until the end of the loan

tenure and eventually own the property.

This is as opposed to merely buying the house upfront and then falling behind their obligations and ending up losing the property.

As such, Nor Shamsiah noted that much is being done to educate consumers on areas relating to credit and financial management, especially through the Agensi Kaunseling dan Pengurusan Kredit (AKPK, Credit Counselling and Debt Management Agency), which has gained greater traction.

AKPK is an agency established by BNM to help individuals take control of their finances through prudent financial management and financial education.

Financial literacy is among the factors that can contribute to sustainable and inclusive economic growth. It is the first line of defence for consumers to protect their rights when dealing with unfair market practices.

Meanwhile, to alleviate the public's burden in coping with the rising cost of living, particularly for the M40 and B40 groups, the Governor said BNM has been emphasising the importance of improving technical skills, reforming the labour market and education system.

"There needs to be greater collaboration between training providers and the industry players to ensure Malaysia produces graduates with the right skills," said Nor Shamsiah.

During the interview, Nor Shamsiah explained at length several other key issues pertaining to the country's economic growth, the banking industry, the vital need to increase consumer awareness, as well as the importance of education, reskilling and upskilling in order to stay relevant in a challenging and constantly changing economy.

## Country Garden Malaysia Unveils First Transit-Oriented Project

**KUALA LUMPUR** — Lake City@KL North was unveiled by Country Garden Malaysia as its first integrated transit-oriented project in Kuala Lumpur.

With the aim to bring convenience by integrating with the external city via an efficient transportation system, the project will continue with the hotel, office, park, shopping mall, connectivity and apartments (HOPSCA) concept.

"The HOPSCA concept—while relatively new in Malaysia—is quickly getting the attention of urban planners as it can accommodate the rapid growth of a city's urban popu-

lation and provide for a more organized use of land space," said Jason Fu, Regional President at Country Garden Malaysia.

"Sitting on 80 acres of prime land, Lake City@KL North will be able to increase the economic activity to create new jobs, ease sustainability and transportation issues, establish landmarks for the city and create synergistic communities."

Recently, property in KL North witnessed an appreciation mostly due to the upcoming MRT Line 2, with seven of its 26 proposed stations set to be located within the vicinity.

Ho Chin Soon, renowned map maker and chairman of Ho Chin Soon Research, noted that the swing in attention towards KL North has been substantial over the last few years.

"Lake City@KL North will diversify living spaces centred around interconnectivity which sets it apart from other developments," said Ho.

"This seamless integration of urban transportation offered in addition to accessibility to highways like the LDP, DUKE, [and] MRR2, will regenerate KL North even further, turning the area into a residential destination of choice," he added.





## Selangor Darul Ehsan: Through the Lens of Time



By  
Muhaimin Merican

### ■ Early History

Based on research mainly through archaeological discoveries, the early development of Selangor's history and cultural heritage can be traced back to the Hoabinhian period. It continued to flourish during the Neolithic, Metal and Protocentric periods.

The early development of Selangor as a settlement was primarily contributed by its geographical factors, which included a network of rivers capable of irrigating the interior areas of the area.

With this advantage, as well as its rich flora and fauna, the settlement in Selangor greatly flourished, and it helped to establish trade relations with the outside world. This is evidenced by the discovery of several artifacts such as the Dong S'on bronze drum in Kampung Sungai Lang, Kuala Langat and Bukit Kuda, Klang and three bronze bells that were found in Klang.



▲ Raja Abdul Samad bin Raja Abdullah

### ■ Early Rule and Selangor Sultanate

The Malay Annals indicate that the Selangor area was under the control of the Sultanate of Malacca in the 15th century; however, Selangor at that time was not a unified domain, with Klang and Jeram being separate river states. According

to the Malay Annals, Tun Perak was appointed the chief of Klang during the reign of Sultan Muzaffar Shah. Later, the son of Sultan Mansur Shah and Hang Li Po, a prince named Paduka Sri Cina, was made raja of Jeram near Langat, which may be due to the presence of Chinese miners there.

In 1766, Raja Lumu arrived in Selangor and founded a new government at Kuala Selangor. He was installed by the Sultan of Perak as Sultan Salehuddin Shah and became the first Sultan of Selangor.

**“ In 1766, Raja Lumu arrived in Selangor and founded a new government at Kuala Selangor. He was installed by the Sultan of Perak as Sultan Salehuddin Shah and became the first Sultan of Selangor. ”**

In the 19th century, the economy of Selangor boomed due to the exploitation of its tin reserves; mining was done in various parts of Selangor. In 1854, the Sultan of Selangor granted Raja Abdullah control of Klang, passing over Raja Mahdi, the son of the chief who previously ruled Klang, which led to the Selangor Civil War fought between 1867 and 1874.

Tin mining attracted a massive influx of Chinese migrant labourers, and Chinese clans allied with Selangor chiefs also joined the civil war. The conflicts

between the factions in Perak and Selangor, as well as concerns over piracy that affected coastal trade, led to increasing British involvement in the affairs of the Malay states.

### ■ British Administration

The arrival of the British into Malaya and the introduction of the Resident system limited the powers of the Sultan and the state government.

During the British administration, a State Council was set up in 1877 with members of the Sultans, British Residents and State dignitaries. The then-Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Abdul Samad, formed the Western Conference Council based on the Western Resident's guide at the time, Bloomfield Douglas.

Klang was the capital of the British colonial administration for Selangor from 1875 until 1880 when it was moved to Kuala Lumpur.

In 1896, mainly through the coordination of the Resident Frank Swettenham, Selangor united with Negeri Sembilan, Perak and Pahang to form the Federated Malay States, with Kuala Lumpur as the capital.

The next change took place in 1909 with the establishment of the Federal Council. In this Council, the Sultan had no authority but to advise the English administration officials, in particular on matters about Malay customs and Islam.

In 1927, the Sultan of Selangor and the other Sultans of the Malay States left the Federal Council.

The administration of the Federated Malay States continued until 1941 when the Japanese invaded the Malaya. When Japan surrendered, Selangor was placed under the British Military Administration (BMA) from September 1945 to early 1946.

### ■ Merdeka and Development

Selangor was the first place the Jalur Gemilang was ever hoisted to replace the Union Jack when on the On August 31, 1957, the declaration of independence and the lowering of the Union Jack flag was held at Merdeka Square. Also on this historic day, Tunku Abdul Rahman was appointed the first Prime Minister of Malaysia.

After Independence, Selangor Darul Ehsan became a state under the Federal Government of Malaysia which adopted the Parliamentary Democracy system with His Highness the Sultan of Selangor as the Head of State with the assistance of the Selangor Chief Minister and members of the Selangor State Assembly Council who coordinated the state administration.

The Sultan of Selangor is a member of the Council of Rulers along with the eight other Sultans, as well as the Yang di-Pertua Negeri of Melaka, Penang, Sabah and Sarawak. This agreement makes the Sultan of Selangor eligible to be elected as Yang di-Pertuan Agong, based on the set rotation system for the YDPA post.

On 1 February, 1974, an agreement between the Selangor State Government Darul Ehsan and the Federation of Malaysia was signed for the establishment of the Federal Territory of Kuala Lumpur. This meant that Selangor relinquished Kuala Lumpur to the federal government. The Sultan of Selangor commemorated



▲ The Malay Rulers with Sir Donald MacGillivray on 5 August 1957 after the Federation of Malaya Agreement-Signing Ceremony.

the city's transfer by building an archway on the borders of the new Federal Territory and Selangor; the Kota Darul Ehsan can still be seen on the Federal Highway between Bangsar and Petaling Jaya.

An area about 25 km southwest of Kuala Lumpur known as Sungai Renggam was identified as the ideal location for the new capital of Selangor to replace Kuala Lumpur. The then-Sultan of Selangor, DYMM Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah, agreed to name the area Shah Alam in the honour of his late father, the late Sultan Hisamuddin Alam Shah Alhaj.

### ■ Modern-day Selangor

The state of Selangor is always ahead in many areas. It is a centre of trade, finance, construction, transportation and manufacturing which contributes to the country's primary income. Selangor also contributes to the agriculture and fisheries sector.

One of the factors that made the state a catalyst for the country's progress was the centralization of economic activity in the Klang Valley, which is also located in Kuala Lumpur in the heart of Selangor.



## TM Bullish about Mobile Business

**KUALA LUMPUR** – Telekom Malaysia (TM) is bullish on its outlook for growth, says new Group Chief Executive Officer Dato' Noor Kamarul Anuar Nuruddin.

Telekom Malaysia Bhd, whose first-half profits ended 30 June more than doubled to RM 422.46 million, claims that its long-term earnings stability depends on how fast it can improve its mobile services.

Unifi Mobile is TM's mobile service arm, which was previously known as Webe.

"Our short-term earnings will be within the guidelines but for the future, I am quite bullish that we can grow our earnings if we improve our mobile services.

"Once we improve that, there is a high possibility that we can get much more," Noor Kamarul said.

"This is the area [in which] we are still not that good. But if we put more effort into this, we will be able to serve better and of course, it will create more revenue.

"Our revenue currently mainly comes from the fixed-line business. We need more revenue from mobile," he added.

Unifi Mobile had yet to break even, and would need more time to do so, said Nor Fadhilah Mohd Ali, Group Chief Financial Officer.

She refused to comment on the timeline but said the group has its own internal target.

"As of 1H 2019, we have seen that on convergence basis, of which unifi Mobile is part of the package, was at 56 per cent of TM households. This was higher than 47 per cent recorded in 1H 2018," she said.

With the exception of the 2016 financial year, unifi Mobile had bleeding losses since TM

took over it in September 2014.

Overall, TM saw its net profit increase from RM 259.09 million a year earlier to RM 422.46 million in the first six months.

However, group revenue dropped 4.1 per cent to RM 5.55 billion from RM 5.78 billion due to lower contribution from all lines of products except data services.

TM also posted double-digit growth in the second quarter, with net profit increasing 12 per cent to RM 114.18 million from RM 101.93 million a year ago. Revenue eased 5.7 per cent to RM 2.77 billion from RM 2.94 billion

"We continued to face challenges in 1H 2019. However, our cost optimization efforts continue to show results and we will keep the momentum on profitability going," said Noor Kamarul.

"We shall navigate the challenges on revenue through a stronger focus on customers. We will also continue to serve as a strategic partner of the National Fibreisation Connectivity Plan (NFCP) backed by our solid network infrastructure," he added.

In line with this more customer-centred approach, unifi had recently introduced unifi Air, the new unifiLite entry package and Streamyx repricing to reward existing customers and attract new ones onboard.

Noor Kamarul also pledged commitment to improved service delivery, such as the implementation of 24-hour installation for new unifi sign-up, customer support within two hours, and a new myunifi app.

"The announced (copper) network upgrade is also ongoing in our commitment to enhancing the overall broadband customer experience," he added.

## MAHB's Q2 net profit jumps 86 per cent to RM 160.08 mil

**KUALA LUMPUR** – Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd. (MAHB) recorded a net profit of RM160.08 million in the second quarter ended June 30, 2019, an 86 per cent jump over the same quarter last year.

According to MAHB, revenue across its various operating segments has been improved, led by airport operations that have expanded 9.6 per cent to RM 1.19 billion

Non-aeronautical segment raised by 4.2 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to RM 528.2 million while non-airport operating income raised by 2.7 per cent from higher contributions from the project and repair maintenance business.

In spite of passenger traffic, the domestic operations experienced 5.3 per cent y-o-y passenger growth to 25.7 million passengers while Turkey airport saw 3.6 per cent more passengers passing through for a total of 8.7 million passengers.

While the Malaysian operations managed to grow PBT by 21.7 per cent to RM 218 million, the Turkey operations posted a loss before tax of RM 16.5 million, indicating an increase of 71.2 per cent over the loss recorded in Q2 last year.

In the same quarter last year, Qatar's operations recorded a lower PBT of RM 100,000 versus RM 3.8 million



Meanwhile, the group's share of associate profits dropped to RM 3 million from RM 6.1 million in the previous corresponding quarter while the share of joint venture profits grew 10.9 per cent to RM 5.1 million.

MAHB's net profit for the first six months of 2019 dropped 41.65 per cent over the same period last year to RM 309.66 million on the back of 6 per cent higher revenue of RM 2.51 billion.

The performance of MAHB in Q1 2018 benefited from one-off gains of about RM 286 million from the fair valuation of investment in a joint venture in Hyderabad and a gain on disposal of its stake in an airport project in the Maldives.

## Tenaga Nasional posts Q2 net profit of RM 1.11 bil, dividends 30 sen

**KUALA LUMPUR** – Power giant Tenaga Nasional posted a net profit of RM 1.116 billion in the second quarter ended 30 June, 2019, a 7.7 per cent decline from the RM 1.237 billion a year ago due to higher forex translation loss and higher funding costs.

On Friday it announced that its revenue had risen 3 per cent to RM 12.87 billion from RM 12.49 billion a year ago. Earnings per share were 19.63 sen compared with 21.82 sen.

It proclaimed a 30-sen interim dividend a share amounting to RM 1.71 billion dividend payout.

Tenaga's operating profit at RM 2.07 billion was higher than a year ago at RM 2.01 billion. However, there was a bigger



drop of RM 272.20 million in the forex sequence relative to RM 169.60 million a year earlier.

However, finance expenses grew to RM 940.10 million from RM 380.60 million a year ago, which saw its pre-tax profit and zakat decline to RM 1.08 billion from RM 1.52 billion a year ago.

In the first half, in the previous corresponding period, its net profit fell by 20.3 per cent to RM 2.67 billion from RM 3.35 billion.

"The reduction was mainly due to the regulatory adjustments which are now accounted for every month starting from this financial year and the MFRS 16 'Leases' which impacted the results by RM 112.2 million. Included in the finance cost the adjustment for MFRS 16 totalling RM 709.5 million," it said.

However, its revenue rose by 5.4 per cent to RM 26.12 billion from RM 24.77 billion, mainly due to a 5.6 per cent drop in electricity revenues, an increase of RM 1.307 billion in the present period from RM 23.27 billion to RM 24.58 billion.

Tenaga also recorded an increase in the unit sold during the quarter under the review of 5.1 per cent.

It also said that RM 1.69 billion was the yield on regulated business under the Incentive Based Regulation (IBR), which

mainly consist of transmission and distribution.

"The higher revenue was mainly attributed to the increase in the group's sales of electricity of 5.6 per cent from RM 23.27 billion in the corresponding period a year ago to RM 24.58 billion.

"In terms of GWh, electricity sales grew by 5.1 per cent to 61,882 GWh in 1HFY2019 in tandem with the 4.5 per cent growth in GDP in Q1 and 4.9 per cent in Q2 as well as hot weather during the period.

Peninsular Malaysia recorded an all-time high peak demand of 18,566 MW on April 18, 2019," it said.

Tenaga said other regulatory changes for the RM 81 million, which was only first recognized in Q4 ended Dec 31, 2018, also further reduced the group net profit.

"In addition, there has been a significant increase in finance cost reported for 1HFY2019 mainly due to the impact of MFRS 16 and new borrowings by the Group.

"Operating expenses rose by 6.3 per cent in the first six months of 2019 mainly due to higher generation cost in line with the increase in electricity demand. The increase in generation cost was contributed by higher gas price and gas consumption," it said.

## 7-Eleven's net profit increases by 11% in Q2

**PETALING JAYA** – 7-Eleven Malaysia Holdings Bhd. reported a total gain of RM 14.59 million in the second quarter ended 30 June 2019, an improvement of 11.1 per cent from RM 13.13 million recorded in the same quarter of the preceding year.

The higher earnings were driven by a favourable sales mix, higher marketing revenue, and improved logistics expenses recovery, partially offset by higher operating expenses from the expansion of new stores, minimum wages, and utilities.

Its revenue had previously increased by 5.6 per cent from RM 557.63 million to RM 588.78

million.

For the first half of the year, 7-Eleven's net profit increased 16.6 per cent to RM 25.73 million compared to RM 22.07 million reported in the same period last year, with revenue rising 7.2 per cent from RM 1.09 billion to RM 1.17 billion.

Bursa Malaysia has been told by the group that it expects trading conditions to remain challenging in the next quarter and will continue to focus on its customers' needs, pursuing its core strategy pillars of operational excellence, cost management and commercial innovation.

Furthermore, 7-Eleven seeks

to refresh its brand in the minds of customers through refreshed stores, marketing developments, sales and interesting product development.

"We are confident that continuous implementation and improvement of our strategic roadmap in strengthening the key areas of assortment, supply chain, operational excellence, store base and digitally enabling the organisation will continue to deliver positive results despite challenging headwinds as we look forward to ensuring that 7-Eleven remains as Malaysian consumers preferred convenience store brand," said its CEO Colin Harvey.



**A milestone in ExcelVite's sustainability initiative**

The Malaysian Sustainable Palm Oil Supply Chain Certification Standard (MSPO SCCS) has been awarded to ExcelVite Sdn.Bhd., the world's leading producer of palm phytonutrients and palm methyl ester.

This comes after an extensive audit by SIRIM.

MSPO SCCS is mandatory for all palm oil processing facilities following the commitment of the Malaysian government to produce certified sustainable palm oil by January 2020.

The certification process for MSPO SCCS is under the purview of the Malaysian Palm Oil Certification Council (MPOCC).

As part of its commitment to promoting the implementation of certified sustainable palm oil, ExcelVite has also recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding with WWF-Malaysia to support smallholders involved in their supply chain in obtaining certified sustainable palm oil.

The palm fruit generated by these certified smallholders will be used in the manufacturing of all palm-based products from ExcelVite.

"We are proud to have become one of the early adopters of the MSPO SCCS in Malaysia. As a supply chain certificate holder, we are committed to implementing all the elements and criteria as stipulated in the MSPO SCCS protocol and it is encouraging to learn that our effort in implementing the MSPO SCCS has been positively affirmed," said ExcelVite QA manager YT Chan.

"I am delighted that we achieved another milestone in our sustainability initiative by being MSPO SCCS-certified. Our incoming feedstocks are certified sustainable from these plantations and smallholders. These are the groups that we need to pay attention to and assist when it comes to sustainability. I am really proud that the team is able to accomplish these achievements.

"With this MSPO SCCS certification, our customers can be further assured that ExcelVite can deliver palm phytonutrients products in a sustainable manner and supporting these smallholders," says chief executive officer WH Leong.

"My hope is that this MSPO SCCS certification and our sustainability initiative will bring forth the realisation that not all oil palm or palm phytonutrient is created equal," added business development manager Bryan See.

**Supporting high-potential start-ups**

ENDEAVOR Malaysia, an organization that supports entrepreneurs, has launched its newScaleUpEndeavor program to help high-potential local start-up companies.

The program runs over 12 months and provides participating entrepreneurs with exposure to Endeavor's panel of business experts, shareholders and service partners to guide founders in their entrepreneur journey and help refine their businesses.

Organized with TIME dotCom as the main partner, the program will allow entrepreneurs to obtain customized mentorship in a structured format through a series of workshops and an assigned mentor to journey with them through the period of the programme.

Mentors such as TIME commander-in-chief Afzal Abdul Rahim, Axiata Digital CEO, Khairil Abdullah, iMoney co-founder Lee Ching Wei, FashionValet co-founder Fadzrudin Anuar and VivvYusof, Juris Tech co-founder and CEO See Wai Hun and Carsome co-founder and CEO Eric Cheng will support the ScaleUpEndeavor program.

Endeavor Malaysia managing director, Arthur Chan says, "We hope that successful companies from this programme will subsequently be further supported with our existing Endeavor Entrepreneur track that focuses on

growing large high-growth companies."

Endeavor is looking for entrepreneurs who dream big and are looking to scale their businesses quickly. These entrepreneurs should be leading scalable and innovative Malaysian-based businesses with a market-proven track record in revenue of more than RM1mil and have been in operation for over 18 months.

Endeavor Entrepreneur track endorsed businesses like The Holstein Milk Company (Farm Fresh Milk), Photobook, Carsome, FashionValet and Common Ground, which cumulatively produced revenue of RM1.3bil in 2018.

Interested companies can register for the programme at [www.scaleupendeavor.my](http://www.scaleupendeavor.my). Deadline for applications is September 4.

Endeavor Malaysia is part of the 1997 Endeavor network, leading the global high-impact entrepreneurship movement to drive economic growth and job creation through the selection, mentoring and acceleration of the best high-impact entrepreneurs around the world.

Endeavor, headquartered in New York City, currently operates in 34 growth markets.

Globally, more than 3 million employment was developed by Endeavor entrepreneurs, generating more than US\$ 20billion in income each year.

**Selangor Dredging focusing on clearing inventory**

KUALA LUMPUR – Selangor Dredging Bhd (SDB) will focus for the time being on clearing its inventory without any planned launches in the weak real estate sector.

"At this point of time we do not have any launches planned, and what we want to be doing is to clear everything," its managing director Teh Lip Kim said at a media briefing after the group's AGM.

Despite having sold an inventory of 95 per cent for some of its development projects, SDB is cautious about the property sector.

Eddy Chieng Ing Huong, group chairman, said, "Malaysia's property sector is picking up at a slow rate due to challenging market conditions coupled with consumers' cautious spending habits from the increased cost of living, as well as firmer bank policies."

SDB failed to reveal the complete inventory price but is estimated at RM 111 million for its present unsold properties.

Meanwhile, RM 241.9 million stands for its unbilled sales for ongoing projects in Malaysia and Singapore.

Teh emphasized that the difficulty of securing financing for prospective property buyers is a major obstacle for the group.

"Our wish would be for the banks to be less restrictive when it comes to home financing, as we and the banks have to work together."

Speaking of its hotel business, she said the refurbishment efforts have started to pay off as the group managed to achieve a 60 per cent occupancy rate

this month.

Due to renovation, Hotel Maya saw a reduced occupancy rate of 38 per cent for the last financial year ending. Its sole hotel property on 31 March 2019.

Despite improving results for the hotel segment, Teh expressed caution about the outlook ahead.

"In view of so many Airbnb apartments coming up, there is a lack of an upside for the average room rate as there is a lot of competition," she said.

On a separate note, SDB's 37 per cent Fortress Mineral Ltd, owned by Singapore, aims to bump iron ore production from this month onwards to 30,000 metric tons (mt) per month.

Currently, its mine in Bukit Besi, Terengganu produces 20,000 meters of high-grade Fe 65 standard iron ore per month with a maximum production capacity of 50,000 meters.

"Basically, for us at the moment, we are pushing as much output as possible for the mining sector," said Teh, adding that the higher production is attributed to improved efficiency in its processing facility.

SDB group general manager Loong Ching Hong said that the current high-grade Fe 65 price is about USD 95 per meter.

"Whereas our cost of production is typically about USD 40 per meter, therefore our margins are roughly 50-60 per cent per meter."

Aside from Malaysia, Brazil is the main producer of the Fe 65 iron ore, and February this year's Vale Dam disaster has severely reduced the production of the ore, driving up prices.

**'Beggar Thy Neighbour' Policy Advice**

By **Jomo Kwame Sundaram**  
**Anis Chowdhury**

**SYDNEY and KUALA LUMPUR** – The harmful effects of falling corporate tax rates have been acknowledged in a recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) research paper. This trend, since the early 1980s, has been especially detrimental for developing countries, which rely on direct taxation much more than developed economies.

Acknowledging that existing international corporate tax rules are unfair, set by developed country governments scantily considering their effects on poor countries, IMF Managing Director, Christine Lagarde, called for a new system earlier this year.

**■ BWIs and corporate tax rates**

However, neither the IMF research nor Lagarde say anything about why corporate tax rates have been falling across

all country groups for over three decades.

The neo-liberal 'counter-revolution' against Keynesian and development economics saw the brief popularity of 'supply side' economics during the early 1980s. The Washington Consensus of the US Treasury Department and the two Washington-based Bretton Woods institutions (BWIs) – the IMF and the World Bank (WB) – ensured its global impact.

All serious empirical research has discredited Chicago Professor Arthur Laffer's claim that lowering corporate tax rates boosts investment and growth rates. Significantly, this included work by US President Ronald Reagan's first Council of Economic Advisers chair, Mar-

tin Feldstein, and his Congressional Budget Office Director, Doug Elmendorf.

Instead, most growth during the Reagan era was due to expansionary monetary policy, as lower interest rates helped the economy rebound from the severe recession of 1982. Likewise, the 2001 and 2003 Bush tax cuts also failed to spur growth, according to Andrew Samwick, chief economist to his Council of Economic Advisers.

Despite their dubious premises, the Laffer curve and similar claims have re-emerged under the Trump presidency, which has already brought corporate tax rates to new lows.



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### ■ Beggar thy neighbour

To qualify for BWI support, developing country governments were expected to undertake tax reforms by lowering typically progressive direct tax rates in favour of regressive indirect taxation, such as value-added taxation (VAT), often dubbed the goods and services tax (GST).

A review of IMF tax policy recommendations to Sub-Saharan African countries during 1998-2008 confirmed that in typical 'one-size-fits-all' fashion, they invariably included reducing corporate and even personal income tax rates, as well as both export and import taxation, besides introducing or expanding VAT.

As an IMF paper concluded about the ostensible justification for its advice, "The complete abolition of corporate income tax would be the most direct application of the theoretical result that small open economies should not tax capital income."

Vito Tanzi and Howell Zee, of the IMF's Fiscal Affairs Department, even recommended taxing labour, instead of capital. They argued that "small countries should not levy source-based taxes on capital income" because, compared to labour, capital was highly mobile and could escape such taxes.

The WB's controversial Doing Business Report (DBR) argues likewise;

paying taxes was one of 11 criteria DBR 2017 used to rank a country's business environment although the WB's enterprise survey found tax incentives not critical among factors affecting foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows.

### ■ Policy advocacy despite evidence

Thus, BWI advice, ostensibly to encourage investment, particularly FDI, led to the harmful competition that has lowered corporate tax rates since the 1980s. Earlier IMF research found that such 'beggar-thy-neighbour' tax competition has caused unnecessary loss of revenue for many developing countries.

OECD research found that direct tax concessions barely diverted, let alone attracted international investment flows. The Economist also found the relationship between tax rates and investment as well as growth rates to be weak.

A G20 report noted, "Tax incentives generally rank low in investment climate surveys in low-income countries, and there are many examples in which ... investment would have been undertaken even without them. And their fiscal cost can be high, reducing opportunities for much-needed public spending ..., or requiring higher taxes on other activities."

### ■ Regressive tax incidence

Corporate tax rate declines over recent

decades have contributed to overall tax incidence becoming more regressive as direct taxes have declined, and indirect taxes, such as VAT, have risen. VAT adoption has been central to BWI tax policy advice to developing countries.

A study of IMF advice on tax matters in 54 IMF Article IV reports between 2005 and 2008 to 10 low-income countries and 10 middle-income countries found that, "VAT was recommended or endorsed by the IMF in 90 per cent of the overall sample..."

An IMF paper found that the BWIs presume that tax is distortionary, and the tax system should focus on raising revenue while minimizing associated distortions. This precluded using taxation for other purposes, e.g., progressive redistribution. Recent IMF research shows that reduced tax progressivity has contributed to growing inequality since the 1980s.

### ■ Quo vadis?

Recognition of taxation's potential for both resource mobilization and reducing inequality can still bring about fundamental changes in BWI conditionalities, advice and technical assistance for developing countries. Greater developing-country engagement in designing international reforms to reduce tax avoidance and evasion by transnational corporations will be crucial.

Excerpt:

Visit this story at

[ipsnews.net/2019/08/beggar-thy-neighbour-policy-advice](https://ipsnews.net/2019/08/beggar-thy-neighbour-policy-advice)



**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**

SELANGOR JOURNAL



### Artscapever 1.3 - "Luminosity"

Artscapever 1.3 "Luminosity" event is based on raising mental health awareness. Ten kinds of mental illnesses (Anxiety, Psychotic, Impulse Control and Addiction, Personality Disorder, Substances Abuse, Post-Traumatic Stress, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Mood Disorder, Eating Disorder and Attention Deficit Hyperactive) which will be the topic of each of the artists' artwork. 20 beautiful artworks, ten talented local artists, two spectacular days, one amazing experience. Mark your calendar and save the dates!

Commune Event Hall (Level 5),  
Sunway Velocity Mall  
11:00 am to 8:00 pm  
28 & 29 Sept 2019 (Saturday and Sunday)  
Luminosity (Mental Health Awareness)  
Free Admission



The 17th edition of Malaysia's leading international human rights documentary film festival, Freedom Film Fest (FFF) will kick off its annual festivities at PJ Live Arts, Petaling Jaya.

PJ Live Arts, Petaling Jaya  
10:00 am - 11:00 pm  
20 - 28 September 2019 (Friday - Saturday)  
RM 10 Online | RM 12 at the Venue | RM 6  
Students and Senior Citizen above 65 |  
For more information, visit: <https://freedomfilm.my/festival/fff2019/>

## SELANGOR JOURNAL

# AROUND TOWN

## September 2019



Sky Mirror, Kuala Selangor, is one of the hidden gems of Malaysia. Considered a must-visit place in Kuala Selangor, this location is becoming increasingly popular among local people and has yet to achieve international fame. It is also known as Sky Mirror, Sasaran Beach.

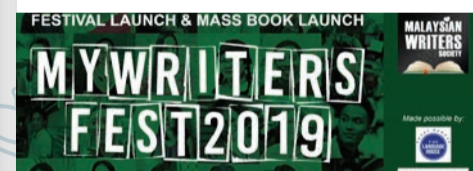
### Migrant & Refugee Poetry Competition 2019 Malaysia



Join the finals of the 5th Migrant and Refugee Poetry Competition, Malaysia. The event will present poetry readings by shortlisted poets (Adult and Junior Category) and cultural program followed by the award ceremony.

Auditorium 7.1 (Level 7), ELM Business School, HELP University, 15, Jalan Seri Semantan 1, Off Jalan Semantan, Bukit Damansara, 50490 Kuala Lumpur  
10:00 am - 12:00 noon  
29 September 2019 (Sunday)  
For more information, visit: [facebook.com/events/2306995849524426/](https://facebook.com/events/2306995849524426/)

### #MYWritersFest2019 Launch



#MYWritersFest2019 is a nationwide festival organised to celebrate Malaysian writers as well as the works that they have written.

The Intermark Mall  
16 September 2019  
2:00 pm - 3:30 pm  
Free Admission  
For more information, visit: <https://diversecity.my/2019-event/mywritersfest2019-launch/>