

SELANGOR JOURNAL

2021 SELANGOR BUDGET

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Bringing down the curve

THE country is seeing an alarming rise in Covid-19 cases following an increase in local transmissions. On Oct 6, Klang was classified as a red zone after recording 77 active cases and will remain under a targeted conditional movement control order until Oct 23.

With a high population density, Selangor has strengthened its resolve to protect its people and contain the spread of the virus. It has upgraded its contact tracing system, SELangkah, initiated targeted screening, and placed limits on the operating hours of eateries with pubs, with the hope to once again flatten the Covid-19 curve.

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MB guarantees sufficient water supply till 2065



Amirudin (third from left) pictured at the HORAS 600 after the launching ceremony of the first HORAS project in Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor, on Nov 27, 2019

By NORRASYIDAH ARSHAD

SUBANG JAYA - Selangor has sufficient water supply for domestic and industrial use to last until 2065, said its Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

"This is the result of a study conducted by the Selangor government regarding the source, supply and distribution of water in the state," he said in a speech read out by the State Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman Izham Hashim in conjunction with the state-level World Rivers Day celebration here on Sept 26.

Amirudin said ongoing efforts to upgrade Selangor's waterworks through the Hybrid Off River Augmentation System (HORAS) 3000 and the Sungai Rasau project will guarantee a continuous supply of water for the people.

However, development of the water supply system will involve high costs, said the Menteri Besar.

"Until last August, all dams recorded a water reservoir capacity of more than 95 per cent due to high rainfall distribution in the catchment area," he said.

The high percentage of capacity means the water treatment plants are able to store raw water for three months if there is no rain.

"The current status shows that Selangor has sufficient water for the people's use although disruptions to supply due to pollution will cause many to experience unscheduled water cuts," he said.

World Rivers Day is an annual global celebration of the world's waterways, held on the fourth Sunday of September, and was initiated to increase public awareness on the many values of rivers.

Selangor to push ahead for RM1 million fine

KUALA LUMPUR - Those who cause pollution to Selangor's rivers will face a minimum fine of RM200,000 or not exceeding RM1 million, and a jail term of up to three years through an amendment to the Selangor Waters Management Authority (Luas) Enactment 1999.

Under the current Section 70 of the Luas Enactment, anyone caught polluting Selangor's waterways is liable to a fine not exceeding RM100,000 or imprisonment of not more than three years or both, and a further fine of RM5,000 for each day the offence is committed after a notice by Luas has been served.

Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said Luas is in the process of improving the Luas Enactment 1999 and would table it at the next Selangor State Legislative Assembly sitting.

"The improved Luas legislation will cover all aspects of the state's water resource management, especially in strengthening the laws to enable the imposition of higher fines on polluters.

"Apart from that, the Department of Environment (DOE) is also in the process of reviewing and amending the Environmental Quality Act 1974 which also emphasises on stricter

forms of punishment for water polluters," he said.

The text of his speech was read by Selangor Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman Izham Hashim at the state-level World Rivers Day celebration 2020 and the launch of the Friends of River Initiative in Subang Jaya, near here on Sept 26.

Meanwhile, Amirudin said the State Executive Council has decided for Luas to set up a special team to monitor and protect the state's reservoirs and river basins.

He said the Luas 'Skuad Pantas' (Rapid Squad) would conduct 24-hour monitoring at the Sungai Selangor, Sungai Langat and Sungai Klang basins.

"The establishment of this squad is to further strengthen the previous state government's initiative, namely the 'Op Sumber Air' which started in March with the participation of various relevant agencies.

"To date, Op Sumber Air has managed to intercept seven incidents that would have caused pollution to the water treatment plants. With this squad, it is hoped that control measures and enforcement will be more stringent and serious," he added. - Bernama

State assures degazetted land will be replaced

KUALA LANGAT - The Selangor administration will replace the Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve with a total of 1,177.31 hectares of land should it proceed with its plans to degazette the forest reserve area.

Selangor state executive councillor for environment Hee Loy Sian (*pic*) said the administration will gazette a bigger area to include 308.6 hectares of the Sungai Panjang Forest Reserve, 606.8 hectares of the Sabak Bernam Forest Reserve, and the Ampang Pechah forest in Hulu Selangor.

"The Selangor State Executive Council approved the replacement of the forests on Jan 31.

"The state government is also planning to expand the replacement area to include 190.2 hectares in Ampang Pechah, Mukim Buloh Telor, Hulu Langat. Its biodiversity makes it suitable as a forest reserve," he said when met at a public hearing on the proposed degazetting of the said forest reserve at the Amverton Resort on Pulau Carey on Sept 27.

Hee said the state administration is open to receiving objections to the proposal from economic, social and environmental standpoints.

"The town hall session was held to continue with the public investigation pro-

cess on the proposed degazette and I hope that the public will present their objections professionally through this platform," he said.

The Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve was gazetted on May 13, 1927, with a total area of 7,247 hectares. Today, only 957.6 hectares of it remain.

In February, the Selangor government published a public notice announcing its plan to degazette 930.93 hectares (97.1 per cent) of the reserve land for a mixed development project.

This plan was precipitated by rapid development in the forest's surrounding areas, including the building of residential and commercial units in Saujana Putra and Gamuda Cove, the North-South Expressway Central Link (Elite) and the Bukit Cheeding tea plantation.

The process of changing the land's status will be made in accordance with Section 11 (b) of the National Forestry Act 1984 (Act 313), which allows the state to degazette forest reserves if it is required for high economic use.

However, Section 12 of the Act states that the degazetted land must be replaced with another forest reserve that is approximately equal in size.



Sultan concerned by latest spike in cases

SHAH ALAM - Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj has expressed concern over the spike in the number of Covid-19 cases nationwide, particularly in the state.

His Royal Highness urged individuals who are symptomatic or have just returned from high-risk areas to immediately undergo Covid-19 screening tests at the hospital and

to comply with the mandatory quarantine order.

Concerned that the people have become less vigilant to the threat of the pandemic, Sultan Sharafuddin called on all quarters to always observe and not take lightly the standard operating procedures set by the government.

"This includes maintaining a physical distance of at least

one metre from others in public places, wearing a face mask when leaving the house, using hand sanitisers, and observing personal hygiene," read a statement on the Selangor Royal Office's Facebook page on Oct 2.

The Sultan also specifically advised the 6.5 million people in Selangor to stay at home and not go to crowded places unnecessarily.

Sultan Sharafuddin firmly reminded the people to play their part to break the chain of Covid-19 infection in the state and in the country.

According to the latest statistics as of Oct 9, eight out of nine districts in Selangor (except for Sabak Bernam) recorded positive cases of Covid-19. - Bernama



Swift measures to contain spread

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government has announced several initiatives in its latest efforts to break the chain of Covid-19 infection following the recent surge in the number of cases.

This includes limiting the operating hours of all eateries with bars in the state until 11pm effective Oct 3, said its Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari in a recent statement.

"Those who fail to comply with the rule will have their business licences revoked immediately," the statement read.

Amirudin said the matter was decided at a special meeting with the State Security Council Committee and the Selangor Task Force for Covid-19 (STFC), held online on Oct 2.

Members of the meeting have also decided to extend the work hours of the Selangor Covid-19 operations room to 7pm.

Furthermore, in a move to prevent large gatherings of people, a cap has been put on the number of attendees of conferences or gatherings at 250.

SELangkah enhanced

The Selangor government has improved on the SELangkah (Step In Safely) contact tracing system with two new features — the 'Map & Review Premises' and 'Check your exposure risk'.

The 'Map & Review Premises' feature allows users to obtain information on premises that have been exposed to the coronavirus

and the date disinfection was carried out at the said premises.

The 'Check your exposure risk' feature allows users to check whether the premises they are visiting is undergoing the 14-day incubation period.

Amirudin said in the near future, SELangkah will also be equipped with a feature that allows users to check whether they are exposed to other individuals who have been tested positive for Covid-19. The identity of the patients will not be disclosed.

"The use of SELangkah has been made mandatory in all government and business premises as part of the additional conditions for the reopening of the economy in Selangor, under the state government circular dated

May 3, 2020.

"We hope that all businesses will clearly display the SELangkah posters (at their premises) and that users will scan the QR code," he said.

All business owners are able to create their own QR code through the selangkah.mbiselangor.com.my website or selangkah.my.

Targeted screening

Selangor has again initiated a targeted Covid-19 screening programme, this time for individuals who visited Sabah between Sept 20 and Sept 26.

Amirudin said the effort was initiated due to an increased number of cases that have been traced to the East Malaysian state.

"Due to the new infections traced from Sabah, the state administration would like to assist the Health Ministry in detecting Covid-19 cases by initiating targeted screening.

"The free screening can be done at any Selcare Clinic, a company under the state-owned Selgate Healthcare Sdn Bhd, (and the individuals will have to) present valid travel documents from Sabah," he said, adding that the service will be made available until Oct 11.

Amirudin said proof of permanent residence in Selangor, such as utility bills, is also required to be presented for the screening.

As of Oct 8, a total of 573 individuals were screened and four cases were confirmed for Covid-19.

CMCO enforced on 36 areas in Klang

SHAH ALAM - The targeted conditional movement control order (CMCO) enforced in the Klang sub-district (mukim) beginning Oct 9 involves 36 residential areas.

Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari in a statement on Oct 8 said standard operating procedures (SOPs) will be enforced in the areas in efforts to flatten the Covid-19 curve.

The enforced areas are:

- Bandar Bukit Tinggi
- Kg Johan Setia
- Kg Bukit Naga
- Kg Perigi Nenas
- Kg Kuantan
- Kg Serdang
- Bandar Puteri
- Kg Sungai Kandis
- Taman Sri Andalas
- Lorong Sungai Udang

- Taman Suria
- Mutiara Bukit Raja
- Bandar Klang
- Pangsapuri Bukit Kuda
- Ken Jimbaran
- Pangsapuri Palm Garden
- Taman Andalas Permai
- Taman Desa Meru
- Taman Seri Lembayung
- Taman Gembira
- Kg Delek Kiri
- Taman Kim Batu Belah
- Kg Sungai Udang
- Taman Klang Perdana
- Taman Bayu Perdana
- Taman Klang Utama
- Taman Sentosa
- Taman Pendam
- Jalan Dato Dagang
- Taman Sejati
- Jalan Haji Tarmizi
- Taman Setia
- Jalan Kebun
- Taman Sri Muda

- Jalan Muhibbah
- Taman Tenaga Bakti

Klang was declared a Covid-19 red zone after it recorded over 40 active cases following a surge in infections nationwide in early October.

The SOPs underlined for Klang during the CMCO period are as follows:

Security

■ Roadblocks will be conducted by police with the help of the Malaysian Armed Forces, Malaysian Civil Defense Force and the Malaysian Volunteer Corps (Rela).

Activities

■ It is advised that only the head of the family leave the

house to get supplies/household necessities. High-risk groups are not encouraged to go out, especially to crowded areas

■ Eateries and convenience stores are allowed to operate between 6.00 am and 10.00 pm

■ Dine-ins are not allowed and the people are advised to use food delivery services or buy takeaways

■ Petrol stations are allowed to open between 6.00 am and 11.00 pm

■ Market operations:
- Wholesale market: 4.00 am to 2.00 pm

- Fresh market: 6.00 am to 2.00 pm

- Farmers market: 6.00 am to 12.00 pm

- Night market: not allowed

■ Government and private clinics are allowed to operate 24 hours

■ Pharmacies and drug stores are allowed to operate from 8.00 am to 11.00 pm

■ Public transport (buses, taxis and e-hailing) are allowed to operate from 6.00 am to 12.00 pm

■ All sports, recreational, social and cultural activities are not allowed from Oct 9 to Oct 23

Closed

■ All mosques, suraus, non-Muslim houses of worship, public and private higher education institutes and skills training institutes, schools, kindergartens, nurseries, tahfiz schools, childcare centres, public parks, recreation centres, and indoor and outdoor playgrounds.

MB: Expect an inclusive budget

By **KHAIRUL AZRAN HUSSIN**

SHAH ALAM - Drawing up the Belanjawan Selangor 2021 (2021 Selangor Budget), which will be tabled on Oct 30, has been described as a challenging process following the economic slowdown due to the Covid-19 outbreak.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the state government had to

take the shared prosperity approach to ensure sustainable and inclusive growth that benefits all groups.

"The upcoming budget is different compared to the 2019 and 2020 Budget, whereby then, development and progress were running smoothly without any hiccups. This time around, there may be slight changes in the direction of the state.

"No matter what the challenges are,

we are confident that with the potential and capabilities combined with the agility of the people as well as of the state administration, we will be able to face it together," he said at the rebranding ceremony of the Idaman housing project in Taman Air Manis, Sabak Bernam, held at the Shah Alam Convention Centre, here on Sept 15.

Amirudin has previously revealed that

the upcoming state budget will include five main thrusts — agriculture, tourism and agro-tourism; public health, housing and urban liveability; microentrepreneurs, digitalisation and urban poverty; wealth creation; and the creative industry.

The public has also been called to submit ideas and suggestions for the upcoming 2021 Selangor Budget at www.amirudinshari.com/selangor2021.

Allocations to lift the people's burdens

KUALA SELANGOR - The people's welfare looks set to be the focus of the upcoming Belanjawan Selangor 2021 (2021 Selangor Budget), which will be tabled on Oct 30.

State executive councillor V Ganabathiran (*pic*) said a proposal has been made to give priority to programmes relating to improving the people's quality of life following the adverse impact of Covid-19.

"We understand what the outbreak has caused, which also resulted in (our) reduced state revenue. We can only hope that the allocation from Belanjawan 2021 will place the people's welfare as its priority," he said after the Healthcare and Nutritious Food-Giving programme at Mukim Ujong Permatang on Sept 14.

Selangor allocated RM2.33 billion for its 2020 Budget. Of that amount, RM1.13 billion or 48.56 per cent was for temporary development while RM1.2 billion or 51.44 per cent was for operation-

nal expenditures.

On March 20, Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari had announced the state's economic stimulus package at a total of RM127.78 million. The package included seven initiatives that were aimed at reducing the financial burden of the people as a result of the Covid-19 outbreak.

Among the initiatives were allocations for the deferment of land loans, benefits for the frontline workers fighting the virus outbreak and benefits for business owners and licensed stall operators.

The second phase of the stimulus package, which was presented on April 1, sought to cushion the socio-economic impact of the outbreak and totalled RM272.5 million.

The state then revealed the economic recovery plan on July 13, which emphasised on food security, economic sustainability and capacity building with a total value of RM55.85 billion.



Big plans ahead for agro sector

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government will be focusing on the agriculture sector in the upcoming Belanjawan Selangor 2021 (2021 Selangor Budget) as it plays a crucial role in providing food security.

Selangor Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman Izham Hashim said the state will increase the potential of the

sector through youth participation and the use of modern technology.

"This is the right time for the youth to grow the sector together. We have big plans coming up which will be shared in the near future.

"The agriculture sector should not only be seen as a producer of quality and affordable goods but it must also bring higher returns," he said at the 2020 Selan-

gor Agro Icon Award Night, here on Sept 14.

Izham said the Covid-19 outbreak serves as a lesson for the need to stimulate the agriculture and food industry as it plays an important part in the cycle of life.

He said the participation of the youth has been encouraging and it would benefit the potential of existing agricultural entrepreneurs in further developing the industry in the future.



(From right) Azrul and Selangor State Finance Officer Dato' Nor Azmie bin Diron with the winner of the 2nd Tourism Selangor Golf Tournament 2020 on Sept 13

Tourism body seeks more revenue

RAWANG - Tourism Selangor expects the state's collection of revenue from tourism to dip slightly this year following the Covid-19 outbreak, as compared to last year's total collection of RM21.8 million.

Its general manager Azrul Shah Mohamad said the state agency is actively running promotions and tourism activities in order to increase revenue collection.

"We are (currently) promoting Selangor as a sports tourism destination in view that it continues to be the location of choice among sports organisers

for all sorts of state- and international-level sporting events.

"Lately, there's been an increase among the locals towards (sports) tourism. Therefore, we have been organising various types of events or competitions at the domestic level (to attract visitors and attention)," Azrul told reporters after attending the 2nd Tourism Selangor Golf Tournament 2020 at Templer Park Country Club on Sept 13.

He added that 50 per cent of the tourism tax collected would be owned by the state govern-

ment, and the balance given to the Federal government.

The government has exempted tax on tourism since July 1, and will continue to do so until June 30 next year in its bid to revive the country's tourism industry.

Meanwhile, tourism agencies, hotel operators and airline companies have been given deferments for the instalment of their tax estimates until the end of the year while tourist accommodation premises were given the deferment that will start from Sept 1 to June 30 next year.

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Borhan and Zawawi sworn in

By **KHAIRUL AZRAN HUSSIN**

KLANG - Tanjung Sepat assemblyman Borhan Aman Shah and Sungai Kandis state representative Mohd Zawawi Ahmad Mughni were sworn in as Selangor state executive councillors at Balairung, Seri Istana Alam Shah, here on Sept 17.

The swearing-in and oath-taking ceremony as well as the conferment of the appointment letter were carried out before the Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj.

In the oath-taking ceremony, Borhan and Mohd Zawawi took the 'Aku Janji' pledge, promising to uphold the best conduct during their tenure.

The pledge includes keeping the confidentiality of discussions; ensuring that Islam is not disturbed or threatened while respecting other religions; preserving the institution of the monarchy; preserving the special position of the Malays and the interest of other races; and executing their duty with high integrity.

The duo's appointment comes in the wake of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia's exit from the state administration on March 5 due to political dynamics that unfolded at the Federal level.

Following the development, Selat Klang state assemblyman Datuk Rashid Asari was dropped from his post as the state executive councillor for tourism.

The political shift also witnessed the vacancy of the Housing and Urban Living post following the termination of Haniza Mohamed Talha's membership from Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR) upon the recommendation of its Disciplinary Board on June 28.

Apart from Borhan and Mohd Zawawi who are from PKR, other representatives from the party holding a state portfolio include Mohd Khairuddin Othman, Rodziah Ismail and Hee Loy Sian.

Representatives from DAP are Dato' Teng Chang Khim, Ng Sze Han and V Ganabattirau; whereas Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud and Izham Hashim represent Amanah.



Amirudin (in blue) with the members of the State Executive Council at the Istana Alam Shah, Klang on Sept 17

Exco lineup unveiled with new portfolios

SHAH ALAM - Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari unveiled his Selangor State Executive Council lineup on Oct 7 following the appointment of two new state executive councillors on Sept 17.

In a statement, Amirudin disclosed five new portfolios to meet the current needs of the state, namely Cultivation of Innovation and Smart Selangor (originally Science, Technology, and Innovation); Disaster Management; Workers Empowerment; Unity; and Halal Industry.

He said two existing portfolios were also renamed to cover a wider scope. They are the Housing and Urban Wellbeing Committee (previously known as Housing and Urban Living

Committee) and the Public Health Committee (previously known as Health).

"Following the recent appointment of the two new members of the Selangor State Executive Council, I have reviewed and reshuffled the portfolios to form a new lineup effective immediately," he said in the statement.

Amirudin said the new state executive councillors — Tanjung Sepat assemblyman Borhan Aman Shah and Sungai Kandis assemblyman Mohd Zawawi Ahmad Mughni — have been assigned the Rural Development and Traditional Village, Malay Customs, Culture, and Heritage portfolio; and the Islamic Religious Affairs,

Consumer Affairs and Halal Industry portfolio, respectively.

He said the minor reshuffle to the lineup affects Rodziah Ismail, who now holds the Housing and Urban Wellbeing as well as the Entrepreneur Development portfolio; Hee Loy Sian, who will oversee the Tourism, Environment, and Green Technology Committee as well as the Orang Asli Affairs Committee; and V Ganabattirau who will helm the Socio-economic Development, Social Welfare portfolio as well as the Workers Empowerment portfolio.

"I hope the restructuring will benefit the people of Selangor and fulfil the 'Selangor Maju Bersama' agenda," Amirudin added.

THE SELANGOR STATE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari

- Finance and Economy
- Land Development and Natural Resources
- Strategic Communications
- Education
- Cultivation of Innovation and Smart Selangor
- Disaster Management

Dato' Teng Chang Khim

- Investment
- Industry and Trade
- Small and Medium Industries
- Co-chairman of the Standing Committee on Non-Islamic Affairs of Selangor

Rodziah Ismail

- Housing and Urban Wellbeing
- Entrepreneur Development

V Ganabattirau

- Socio-economic Development
- Social Welfare
- Workers Empowerment
- Co-chairman of the Standing Committee on Non-Islamic Affairs of Selangor

Izham Hashim

- Infrastructure and Public Amenities
- Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry

Ng Sze Han

- Local Government
- Public Transportation
- New Village Development

Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud

- Public Health
- Unity
- Women Empowerment and Family

Hee Loy Sian

- Tourism
- Environment and Green Technology
- Orang Asli Affairs
- Co-chairman of the Standing Committee on Non-Islamic Affairs of Selangor

Mohd Khairuddin Othman

- Youth and Sports Development
- Human Resource Development

Borhan Aman Shah

- Rural Development and Traditional Village
- Malay Customs, Culture, and Heritage

Mohd Zawawi Ahmad Mughni

- Islamic Religious Affairs
- Consumer Affairs
- Halal Industry

Service providers trained and ready to help

By ZAREEF MUZAMMIL

AMPANG - The Selangor Information Technology and e-Commerce Council (Sitec) has nurtured more than 90 professional service providers for the digital economy platform in the last two years.

State Investment, Industry and Trade, Small and Medium Industries Committee chairman Dato' Teng Chang Khim said these providers had undergone training and guidance for four months under the Selangor Accelerator Programme.

"These professional (digital) service providers work to promote and advertise products of entrepreneurs on e-commerce platforms such as Lazada, Shopee, BungkusIT and Youbeli.

"If entrepreneurs are unsure about how to make good advertisements even though they are selling great products, these professionals are ready to assist," Teng said during a speech at the Selangor Digital Entrepreneur Roadshow 2020 here on Sept 19.



Teng (second, right) during the launch of the Workforce Management Digitalisation Programme (Produkt) on Oct 1

The third series of the state's roadshow gathered 200 entrepreneurs from around the Ampang area which allowed them to pick up some digital business know-hows

from Shopee, Lazada, Boost e-dompet, Avana, Ninja Van, BungkusIT, Youbeli and state government agency Hijrah Selangor, among others.

Sitec in search of the best e-business

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor Information Technology and e-Commerce Council (Sitec) invites qualifying participants to take part in Sitec Malaysia's Top e-Commerce Merchant Awards 2020.

According to Sitec, those interested can register their participation through www.sitec.com.my/topecm2020/, which has been open since Sept 15, to stand a chance of winning an overall prize of RM40,500.

"Do not let go of this opportunity to be part of this event! Are you the owner of an e-commerce business that we are looking to nominate as champion for this year of 2020?" Sitec's Facebook states.

The prestigious award aims to offer acknowledgement and appreciation towards the accomplishments, creativity and innovation among e-commerce entrepreneurs in the country, thus opening up opportunities for them to expand their brands in their respective industries.



New industrial areas earmarked

KUALA LUMPUR - Invest Selangor Bhd is in the process of changing the status of several areas in Selangor that have the potential to be developed into new industrial areas.

Its chief executive officer, Dato' Hasan Azhari Idris said several areas in the Klang, Kuala Langat and Sepang districts have been identified as the new industrial areas in collaboration with private developers.

"Hence, this is the best time to start planning to receive potential new investment inflows when the economy recovers after the Covid-19 pandemic ends,"

he said in an interview on *Bernama TV's 'Ruang Bicara'* on Sept 14.

Hasan Azhari said these areas will be able to cater to the demand for the development of industries due to their proximity to the strategic position of ports and airports in the state.

"We will continue to position Selangor as the leading business destination in Malaysia and will not stop planning for the opportunities from the Covid-19 challenge," he said.

On the readiness of Malaysian entrepreneurs to adopt e-commerce, Hasan Azhari said a significant increase could

be seen in terms of its use for business lifeline since the movement control order was enforced on March 18.

For example, he said the Selangor e-Bazaar Programme held during the fasting month of Ramadan last year managed to attract 8,400 entrepreneurs with sales reaching more than RM300 million, surpassing its target of 5,000 entrepreneurs.

He hopes all small and medium enterprises could seize the opportunities provided by the government to explore the wider market through economic digitisation. - *Bernama*

World Bank lowers Malaysia's growth forecast

KUALA LUMPUR - Following a sharper than expected contraction in the second quarter of 2020 (2Q20), the World Bank has lowered Malaysia's economic growth forecast this year to a contraction of 4.9 per cent, down from an early estimate of -3.1 per cent.

In a statement on Sept 29, the World Bank said the change in the forecast reflected the heightened uncertainty surrounding the start and speed of the global economic recovery, which will weigh on investment decisions and external demand.

In addition, the elevated unemploy-

ment rate and other weaknesses in the labour market will continue to weigh on private consumption, it added.

Following the economy-wide temporary closures and reduced business operations, the World Bank said the labour market was significantly impacted, with unemployment rising to 5.1 per cent in the second quarter of 2020, its highest rate in 30 years.

Labour force participation declined to 68.1 per cent in the second quarter from 68.8 per cent in the first quarter and many workers faced reduced hours and pay.

"Reflecting these developments, most demand components, such as net exports, private consumption and private investment are expected to contract in 2020," the World Bank said following the launch of its Economic Update report for East Asia and the Pacific.

Malaysia's economy is severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, leading to a double-digit contraction of 17.1 per cent in the second quarter of 2020, mainly driven by a decline in domestic demand due to the imposition of the movement control order to stem its spread, as well as weak external conditions.

Government expenditure is expected to increase, mainly due to stimulus spending, noted the bank.

Meanwhile, poverty at the US\$5.50 per day (2011 Purchasing Power Parity dollars) upper-middle-income poverty line is projected to increase slightly to 0.9 per cent from 0.8 per cent in 2020.

The World Bank said the increase is due to higher unemployment, reduced work hours, and slower business for small and medium enterprises, although these contractionary effects were offset to some degree by government relief and recovery measures. - *Bernama*

State banking on more deals

SHAH ALAM - Selangor registered RM11.6 billion of investment in the manufacturing and services sector as of June this year.

State Investment, Industry and Trade, Small and Medium Industries Committee chairman Dato' Teng Chang Khim said manufacturing contributed RM3.3 billion

while RM8.3 billion is from the services sector.

"Compared to the previous year, the numbers are lower due to the Covid-19 pandemic, (but) we (the state government) expected it to affect our performance (investment).

"However, we still have hope (for additional investment) as

there are several applications made last year which are still on hold. Also, there were several enquiries made but there's no confirmation yet.

"As for now, there is at least RM5 billion (of investment) that are notified as confirmed and verified but we have yet to receive their official application,"

said Teng after the launch of the Workforce Management Digitalisation Programme (Produkt) on Oct 1.

Produkt is a state government initiative that helps small and medium enterprises in Selangor to undergo digitalisation and adopt Industry 4.0 technologies.

Teng said although the state

government has set the target of achieving RM12 billion of investments this year, his team could not conduct promotions overseas due to the coronavirus outbreak.

However, he said the state has taken the initiative to conduct and join 10 webinars and has received good response from them.

Invest Selangor's networking goes full tilt

ISKANDAR PUTERI - Invest Selangor Bhd, the state's foreign and domestic direct investment promotion agency, is intensifying efforts to hold networking sessions with industry players to attract investors.

Chief executive officer Datuk Hasan Azhari Idris said in the face of the current economic uncertainties due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent movement restrictions, the agency is focusing on promoting investments among industry players in the country.

"We share about the initiatives taken by the Selangor state government, especially the Selangor Business Hub (SBH), which provides a virtual networking platform for businesses to enable the business community to communicate virtually without the need for a physical presence," he told *Bernama* after the Selangor Initiatives and Opportunities programme here, recently.

The one-day programme was in collaboration with the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) Johor, attended by 40 industry players under the auspices of the Johor Bahru Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (JBCCCI).

Johor is the second state to host the programme after it was held in Sabah earlier this year, and the programme in Penang on Sept 29.

Hasan Azhari said the SBH comprises three main components, led by the Invest Selangor Investment Promotion Programme — a portal that hosts webinars and virtual conferences organised by the agency, involving potential partners and investors across the region.

The second component is the Selangor International Business Summit — an online alternative to the Selangor International Business Annual Summit, comprising the Selangor International

Expo, the Selangor Asean Business Conference, and the Selangor Smart City and Digital Economy Convention.

The third component is the Selangor Information Technology and e-Commerce Council (Sitec) Virtual Hub, which helps the council to expand its reach to international audiences.

"Apart from SBH, we had also shared the initiatives to develop the halal industry in Selangor. We also conduct classes to help entrepreneurs achieve halal certification.

"We also disclosed our efforts to improve the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Selangor, such as helping the community to get funding, helping entrepreneurs to move from the conventional to digital systems, especially in starting an online business either through the Lazada or Shopee e-commerce platforms," he said.

Hasan Azhari added that the Selangor e-Bazaar Raya campaign with Shopee, held from May to June this year, helped 6,400 new entrepreneurs to sell their goods and services on the platform.

He said Selangor is an attractive business destination, as it has the required infrastructure, geographical location, human capital and economic strength.

The state recorded an economic growth rate of 6.7 per cent last year, he said.

"Selangor has a better industrial ecosystem compared with other states in the country.

"We have a vast transportation network, we produce about 66,000 graduates a year through more than 160 public and private institutions of higher learning, colleges and industrial training centres."

These factors, he said, will help Selangor to realise its vision to become a smart state in the Asean region by 2025. - *Bernama*



Digitalise now or be left behind, says MB

AMPANG - The Selangor Menteri Besar is urging entrepreneurs to start riding on the digital wave for their businesses and advised that they should not wait any longer to do so.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the rapid advancement in technological frontiers has required entrepreneurs to become more proactive in strategising their marketing plans to stay competitive in business.

"Entrepreneurs must change their mindset and realise that the future has arrived. If we don't act now we will be left behind and if we are not prepared, we will miss out on a lot of things.

"We are actually heading towards smart living with elements that include e-commerce or online business which

is the new lifestyle that everyone must now learn to accept," he said.

Amirudin was speaking during the launch of the third series of the Selangor Digital Entrepreneur Roadshow 2020, held at the Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) here on Sept 19.

Amirudin explained that virtual business has the capability to expand an entrepreneur's potential and propel them to compete in local and international markets.

"This is evident through the Selangor e-Bazaar Raya with Shopee, which ran from May until July this year. We have managed to make RM341 million in revenue and have attracted 8,400 businesses to the platform. Of that, 6,400 were new to online business," he added.

By IDA NADIRAH IBRAHIM

In recent years the global economic scene has been rapidly moving towards digitalisation. So too, has the state of Selangor.

However, Malaysia as a whole is still catching up as the e-commerce and digital marketing ecosystem has yet to develop to reach a competitive level.

Speaking to *Media Selangor* in a recent interview, Selangor Information Technology and e-Commerce Council (Sitec) chief executive Yong Kai Ping said the challenge faced by Malaysia is the insufficient number of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) as well as e-commerce traders.

"Our population is at about 32 million, therefore the number of SMEs should be about 10 per cent out of that figure, which is about 3.2 million. But right now, we only have about 1.3 million SMEs because we rely too much on FDI (foreign direct investment).

"When the Covid-19 outbreak happened, FDI could not come in so we had to rely on the circulation of the internal economy. So what we need to do now is to increase the number of SMEs," said Yong, adding that the estimated number of homegrown e-commerce traders is less than 100,000.

According to Yong, SMEs and micro-SMEs include e-commerce merchants and startups, and they can help in creating jobs and wealth for the people.

THE OLD SUPPORTING THE NEW

Yong said Sitec aims to create an ecosystem for both e-commerce merchants as well as startups in Selangor to be able to work hand-in-hand as the former requires the use of technology service providers, which are obtained from the startups.

He said the state agency also aims to create a balance between the new economy (e-commerce and startups) and the old economy (traditional businesses), and form a hybrid business model with the two.

"We are transferring from the old economy to the new economy and that is from offline to online. So there is a mix, a hybrid model is what we are looking at now.

"What we are doing is to promote the automation industry to digitalise themselves. Digitalisation does not mean having an online presence and selling items online alone. It means that whatever business decision is made, it is based on data," he said.

Yong said Sitec aims to see the synergy of the old economy supporting the new economy instead of having conflict arise between the two.

"Old money must support new money. We need more startups and more people to do their own business and sell online but at the same time see traditional industries support the new economy.

"This means that money from traditional businesses can support the new technology. It is a good time to support startups and to invest in e-commerce.

"That is what we are looking at. From there, we can build a good ecosystem of the digital economy," said Yong.

COURAGE AND RISKS

Yong said one of the main reasons the number of SMEs and e-commerce in Malaysia is low is because many people are still in their comfort zone of being wage earners.

He said Malaysians must take a step forward and be brave enough to delve into the business sector in order to have a more competitive market.

"The movement control order (MCO) was actually a blessing in disguise as it pushed the transformation of digitalisation

Taking the digital plunge

faster. In our previous experience in working with merchants, we found that our local merchants are working in the comfort zone because the market is not very competitive, unlike in China and Indonesia. We don't have enough merchants so it is not competitive.

"Malaysians also have to start to really love the concept of building their own startups, the idea of e-commerce sellers having to become their own boss. Malaysians are still used to the concept of 'makan gaji' but they have to take the plunge to jump into the business sector."

Yong said the safe and familiar path for Malaysians is to work in a firm or company after graduating.

He said to become your own boss is the unfamiliar path, and involves having a lot of courage, taking risks, and experiencing uncertainties and high pressure.

"But with enough support in education and technical funding, we have seen the growth of Malaysian-owned SMEs and startups," he said.

IN THE LEAD

In comparison to other world-leading economies, such as the US and China, or Japan and Taiwan, Yong said Malaysia has a lot of potential in e-commerce.

"Maybe we are a few years behind but we are catching up," he said.

Yong said within Malaysia, the state of Selangor is leading in the digital economy.

"When we recently worked together with Invest Selangor (Bhd) to do a business presentation in Johor and Penang, we saw that many had admired Selangor for leading in the digital economy.

"Klang Valley has always been at the centre (of digital advancement) but with the efforts we put in to build this ecosystem, we were able to grow faster. Sometimes when we get lucky we would stumble onto world-leading technologies," said Yong, citing as an example the use of artificial intelligence (AI) cameras at oil palm plantations that have the ability to identify the different grades of oil palm fruit. That particular technology, said Yong, had been formulated by a Selangor startup consisting of two programmers.

"In terms of job creation, we have a lot of startups in Selangor working in the gig economy. For example in delivery, we have one startup that lends motorbikes to riders. They have about 80 bikes and

Sitec has been playing three main roles — being the incubator for e-commerce merchants, being an accelerator for startups in Selangor, and helping with digitalisation of SMEs

YONG KAI PING
SITEC CHIEF EXECUTIVE



are based in Shah Alam."

Yong said since Sitec has started early in assisting businesses in digitalisation, the state agency was at an advantage during the MCO as they have already built a solid base of merchants from as long as five years ago.

"It was easier for us when the pandemic happened, easier to get the merchants on board because we knew how to ... we have the experience in assisting the merchants in growing their business and we also have startups equipped with technology and funding opportunity to assist them.

SELANGOR AS LAUNCHPAD

Yong said from the time Sitec was first formed in 2015, the Selangor government state agency has been playing three main roles — being the incubator for e-commerce merchants,

and its economic impact

Total gross merchandise volume (GMV) 2015 - 2019: RM200 million

Online 100 & Apps 100

- 575 merchants trained to be e-commerce ready since mid-2015
- Year 2019: RM15,000,000 in revenue
- Total GMV of merchants: RM41 million

Selangor Accelerator Programme

- 30 out of 100 applicant startups shortlisted
- Aims to make startups investor-ready and pitch-ready
- Pitching in China and Malaysia: RM26 million in GMV

Top e-Commerce Merchant Awards

- Aims to reward the best e-merchants in Malaysia
- Recorded sales in 2019: RM20 million
- Total recorded sales in 4 years: RM 56 million

Selangor Smart City Convention

- 80 to 100 exhibitors from local and overseas
- Average 5,000 to 8,000 participants each year
- Total GMV sales and business matching: RM77 million



being an accelerator for startups in Selangor, and helping with digitalisation of SMEs.

He said over 600 e-commerce merchants in Selangor have been trained to enter the online digital marketplace, which includes getting traders to come on board as well as equip them with a full-scale website that comes with a payment gateway and a shopping cart.

"Through our Selangor Accelerator Programme, we have nurtured more than 90 Selangor startups that have the minimum viable product ready for investment.

"We have also introduced various digital processes that can be utilised by the SMEs through our digitalisation initiatives, such as getting the businesses equipped with cloud HR and business intelligence, including AI."

Yong cited the recent Selangor e-bazaar initiative launched by the Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari as one of the success stories as it was able to rope in 6,400 traditional businesses and make good profits.

"For example, we have an aunty selling 'baju melayu' who used to make about RM2,000 a month in sales but after coming on-board, her business improved to RM50,000 a month in sales. And this was done through the Selangor e-bazaar Raya campaign.

"People were starting to buy things online out of fear of Covid-19. They opted for online (shopping) as it is safer and faster in terms of delivery and provides a variety of choices as well," he said.

"We saw the tremendous growth of e-commerce the past six months especially during the MCO period and have forecasted that the sales in e-commerce may have increased three-fold in Malaysia."

Setting the highest standards for Subang Jaya

By SHERILYN PANG

Self-sustaining suburban constituency Subang Jaya has been under the care of Michelle Ng Mei Sze since 2018. After 20 years operating as a municipality, the constituency under the Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) is finally set to herald its highly-anticipated 'city' status on Oct 20.

In an interview with *Selangor Journal*, Ng, who completed her Bachelor of Laws (LLB) at the London School of Economics on a Maxis Scholarship, said she decided to trade her legal profession for a chance to stand for public office during the 14th General Election in 2018. Having won with a whopping majority, her goal now is to put in place long-term solutions that will safeguard the future of the residents of Subang Jaya.

SJ: Give us an introduction to your constituency, and tell us how it has progressed.

Historically, Subang Jaya (SS12-19, USJ1-22) was a plantation. It also includes Sunway, which was a mining site. These areas were then developed into a township by Sime UEP Properties Bhd and the Sunway Group, respectively. SS12-19 began developing from 1976 to 1988, followed by USJ. The Sunway area, on the other hand, started developing in 1986. Subang Jaya is a suburban constituency which prides itself in being a self-contained township. Residents have access to education, entertainment, daily needs and more without having to travel far.

SJ: What is the main attraction of Subang Jaya?



People would mainly travel to Subang Jaya for tertiary education. Subang Jaya is a flourishing education hub with some of the best private universities in Malaysia. These include Sunway University, Monash University, Taylor's University, INTI College and SEGi College. Besides providing quality and globally-recognised qualifications, these universities also have a wide network of international universities making it the go-to (education) destination not only for Malaysians but also for students from abroad.

SJ: What are some of the concerns raised by your constituents? How do you address them?

The biggest challenge now is water disruption caused by pollution. Subang Jaya receives its water from two main rivers —

Sungai Selangor and Sungai Semenyih — which have been affected by odour pollution incidents. During the November 2019 state assembly sitting, I brought a motion for a dedicated committee to be set up to monitor these issues. In March this year, the Special Select Committee on Selangor Water Resource was formed and I was appointed to lead the committee. The function of the Select Committee is to act as legislative oversight on matters relating to water resources.

Since then, we have tabled a thorough report in the June 2020 State Assembly Sitting, proposing 38 recommendations to deal with the issue of pollution. Most of these recommendations require funding, except for legislative reforms. We have since lobbied for stricter penalties, at least for laws within state control, namely the Selangor Waters Management Authority Enactment. We are made to un-

derstand that the executive has taken heed of our call, and will be tabling amendments in the upcoming State Legislative Assembly.

SJ: What are some of your achievements in the constituency thus far?

A staggering problem I was met with was the number of suicide cases within the constituency. Due to the struggle and stigma faced by those experiencing mental illness, my office decided to set up SJ Care Warriors which is a Mental Health Taskforce comprising mental health professionals and volunteers who provide training in suicide prevention and champion resilience-building for the youth. To date, we have trained 120 people in suicide prevention and 90 others in resilience-building.

Subang Jaya is soon becoming an ageing population. Through our work with the Senior Citizen's Club of Subang Jaya, the club has

been selected by the Social Welfare Department to become an Elderly Activity Centre (PAWE) for the Parliament of Subang. We successfully lobbied for an allocation of RM100,000 in 2019 for the cost of setting up the centre. PAWE has organised many programmes and events for the elderly.

Another successful initiative under our belt is the Pusat Peduli Kanak-Kanak, which functions as a place of refuge and serves as an activity centre for children. It was through our partnership with the Social Welfare Department and the State Health, Welfare, Women Empowerment and Family Committee that Subang Jaya was chosen to pilot this project.

In realising the full potential of recycling, my office launched two types of recycling projects — an at-source recycling project whereby every household in USJ 5/1&2 and USJ 2/5 was given three different-coloured reusable and washable bags for waste separation, and a RM5,000 allocation for selected strata developments to purchase recycling bins.

SJ: What are some of your problem-solving methods?

Fact-finding first. That means to listen to both sides. Conduct studies and research, if required. In problem-solving methods, affected parties want to know that the decision-maker or mediator has heard them fully for sufficient and adequate backgrounds to be established to make an informed assessment. This also allows opposing sides to vent or voice out, which helps with the emotional process. That is a step which is often missed. From there, I assess the strengths and weaknesses of both sides and begin negotiations to bring the parties to a common ground.



Managing mental health in tough times

By **IDA NADIRAH IBRAHIM**

THESE days, in our fast-paced, modern world, it is no longer unusual for people to have a myriad of health problems. The Covid-19 outbreak has only escalated socio-economic problems, often with serious outcomes.

Lockdown measures enforced by governments worldwide to prevent the spread of the coronavirus have not only affected the livelihoods of people, but also contributed to their levels of anxiety, raising concerns of mental health issues. The fear of being in isolation, the stress that comes

with losing one's job, and the sense of helplessness in losing loved ones are all too real these days.

Based on a recent survey published by global market research company Ipsos Malaysia, 44 per cent out of its 500 Malaysian respondents say that staying at home for long hours has impacted their mental wellness. More than half (56 per cent) of the respondents say they have been less active physically since the beginning of the Covid-19 crisis.

In the 2019 National Health and Morbidity Survey published by the Health Ministry in May this year, mental health is referred to as the 'hidden pandemic', with 424,000 children in the country found to have mental health problems and 2.3 per cent of adults facing depression.

Due to such growing concerns, the Selangor government has stepped up on efforts to address mental health issues and has been committed in this area since it initiated several programmes that focus on target groups last year.

In conjunction with the World Mental Health Day 2020 on Oct 10, state executive

councillor for public health Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud (*pic*) shed some light on the emphasis given by the state administration in creating more public awareness on mental health.

"The (recent) statistics on mental health is worrying. One of the factors leading to this is the influence of social media.

"The state government in collaboration with mental health-related NGOs, the Education Department, and several other agencies have initiated several preventive activities, especially for the most vulnerable group, the teenagers," she told *Selangor Journal* recently.

Support groups

Following the two-month movement control order (MCO) period, the Selangor administration is doubling down on its 'Awak OK 2.0' campaign, where in-depth discussions on one's mental wellbeing are carried out.

Dr Siti Mariah said eight series of topics will be aired in the months of November and December to the public.

"We also have the 'Awak OK' support group, where we create support groups or circle time that enable participants to sign-



up to receive consultation, counselling, and face-to-face meet-ups with mental health experts.

"The participants, who are mainly those battling mental health problems, will be counselled via six sessions until they find a solution to the problems they face," she said.

The titles of the sessions include Journey to Recovery, Self Care Not Selfish Thriving in the Journey of Pain, and Message Of Hope – Sinar Harapan.

During the MCO, Dr Siti Mariah said the 'Awak OK' Mental Health Interactive Programme was launched on Facebook, and held over 22 episodes. Each session involved the participation of psychologists, psychiatrists,

and NGOs.

She said in the previous year, some of the programmes held include empowerment programmes for registered counsellors in Selangor, programmes to counsel teachers, periodic training sessions for peer-counsellors in schools, and training and awareness programmes on mental health for the frontline workers.

Next step

For the 2021 Selangor Budget, Dr Siti Mariah said the state government will give focus to public health, which includes the effects of Covid-19, dengue, tuberculosis, non-communicable diseases, as well as mental health.

"The allocation for public health for next year will focus on the community," she said.

Dr Siti Mariah added that the community must be educated and take heed of the importance of mental health.

"All direct or indirect stakeholders, whether it is the administration, NGOs, or private sectors, must play their role in identifying the issues early on and carry out preventive measures as well as treatment."



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MBSA tables 2021 budget

By **KHAIRUL AZRAN HUSSIN**

SHAH ALAM - The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) has tabled its 2021 Budget with an estimated total of RM498.82 million and an expected deficit of RM28.06 million.

The Shah Alam mayor Datuk Haris Kasim said RM396.14 million will be used for management expenditure and RM130.74

million for development expenditure, whereas the deficit will be borne by MBSA's reserves.

"The largest allocation for management expenditure is for services and supply, which involves a total of RM307 million or 77.5 per cent of the total," he said.

"Development expenditure has shown an increase, which is RM9.7 million com-

pared to the previous year, with 56 per cent of the overall allocation used for construction projects and the upgrading of buildings," said Haris at a press conference after presenting the MBSA 2021 Budget with the theme 'Pioneering the New Norm for a Better Shah Alam', at Wisma MBSA on Sept 29.

He said the estimated revenue in 2021

is expected to increase as much as 3.8 per cent, from RM480.57 million to RM498.82 million.

"The assessment tax is expected to contribute RM323.18 million or 64.8 per cent of the overall sum; non-tax revenue RM166.14 million or 33.3 per cent and non-revenue collection RM9.5 million or 1.9 per cent," he noted.



Council buys 45 bodycams to lessen disputes

SHAH ALAM - The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) has bought 45 units of body-worn cameras to help address incidents of disputes between its enforcement officers and members of the public.

Its mayor Datuk Haris Kasim said aside from being able to record any untoward incidents, the equipment can also transmit live video footage of operations to the command centre, which can then

be used as evidence.

"Each bodycam costs RM1,000 and we are considering adding more. Currently, one member of the enforcement team will be wearing it while on duty.

"Usage of this device gives justice to both sides, either when the officers face accusations while on duty or when a civilian becomes the victim of abuse of power," said Haris during a press conference af-

ter tabling the MBSA 2021 Budget themed 'Pioneering the New Norm for a Better Shah Alam', at Wisma MBSA, here on Sept 29.

On June 22, the Selangor Local Government, Public Transportation and New Village Development Committee chairman Ng Sze Han gave local authorities until the end of the year to equip their officers with bodycams to improve efficiency and integrity.

RM1 mil collected from plastic bag fee

KAJANG - The Selangor state government has collected RM1.1 million in charges through the 20-sen-per-bag initiative within the first six months of this year.

State Environment and Green Technology Committee chairman Hee Loy Sian said the collection was carried out by the local authorities and the amount collected was from supermarkets and business premises registered under the programme.

"The collection has been deposited into the trust fund used for environmental programmes such as planting trees and river cleaning.

"We expect the collection to reach between RM2.5 and RM3 million by the end of this year," Hee said when met by reporters after the launch of the Save the Ozone Awareness programme in conjunction with the state-level World Ozone Day 2020 at the Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) Professional College here on Sept 22.

The Kajang state assemblyman urged the public to minimise the use of plastic bags and conventional straws in order to protect

the environment.

He also called for restaurant operators in the state to refrain from providing straws to customers for drinks unless they request for it.

"Even though these items are small in size, when they are disposed of and not managed well in the landfills, they will be washed into drains and eventually pollute the environment.

"That is why we hope that everyone can work together and care for the environment, not just by reducing illegal logging activities but also cut down on the use of (plastic) bags and straws," he said.

The Selangor government had given approval for the plastic bag fee to be collected through local authorities from Jan 1, this year.

Businesses that are registered under the plastic bag charge collection programme can collect the form from their respective local councils.

Operators are required to clearly display the registration number and certificate in their premises.

Mangrove ecosystem to offer respite for city folks

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor Maritime Gateway (SMG) project plans to introduce Mangrove Point as a new ecotourism destination in the state.

Project manager Halimatul Ssaadiah Masnan said the development of the site, which spans over 28 hectares along the Klang River, is expected to complete next year.

"The location will soon be the best place for tourists to spend

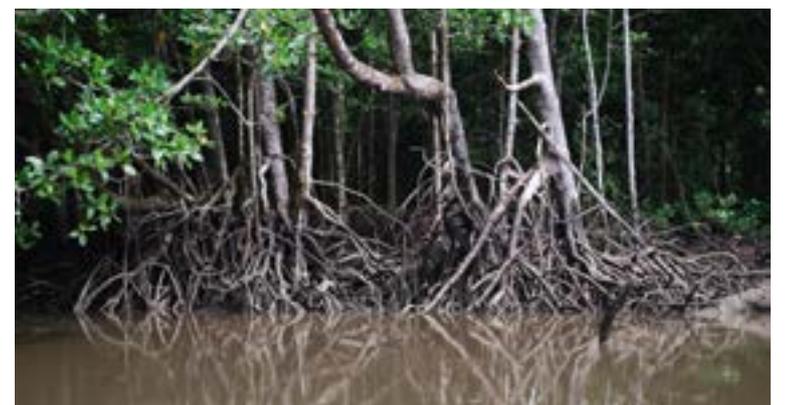
time with their family aside from introducing the wonders of nature to the children and teaching them how to care for it," she said on an SMG corporate video.

Halimatul said the area would also appeal to rehabilitation practitioners as it is an ideal location for certain groups of people to carry out therapies, such as for patients, where benefits can be drawn from the positive interaction between humans and the

environment.

She added that six mangrove species have been identified in the area.

They include the Lenggadai (*Bruguiera parviflora*), a nationally endangered mangrove tree from the family Rhizophoraceae; white mangrove; Bakau Kurap (*Rhizophora mucronata*); Bakau Minyak (*Rhizophora apiculata*); Tengar and Tumu Merah (*Bruguiera gymnorrhiza*).



Drones to monitor our rivers

SUBANG JAYA - The Selangor state government, through the Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas), will utilise drone technology to monitor water sources in the state other than using it to acquire water samples and receive warning signs of suspicious activities.

According to a news report by *Sinar Harian* on Sept 26, the pilot project proves that the state administration is serious about preventing water source pollution, and includes the establishment of a Luas Speed Squad that carries out 24-hour surveillance across high-risk water source areas at the Sungai Selangor, Sungai Langat and Sungai Klang river basins.

State Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman Izham Hashim said Luas, via the Op Sumber Air since last March, had prevented seven incidents of pollution from taking place. The incidents could potentially cause water treatment plants to cease operations and lead to water dis-

ruption.

"However, one pollution incident in Sungai Gong was slow to be reported, which resulted in water disruption to 1.2 million account holders early this month," said Izham during the launch of the state-level World Rivers Day 2020 Programme at Subang Jaya Riverfront on Sept 26.

The Malay daily also reported that Izham said the state government is discussing the move to give incentives to those who alert the authorities about activities that may cause river pollution so as to prevent a recurrence of such incidents.

On Sept 10, Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said drone technology will be used to monitor the rivers to prevent unforeseen incidents that would pose a risk to the sources of raw water.

Amirudin added that the technological inclusion would enable more frequent surveillance of Selangor's two primary rivers, Sungai Selangor and Sungai Langat.



MBPJ sets up portal for strata scheme data

SHAH ALAM - The Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) has launched a portal-based eCOB Management System to gather and store integrated strata scheme data for multiple-storey housing.

Petaling Jaya mayor Datuk Mohd Sayuthi Bakar said the system enables MBPJ's Commissioner of Building (COB) unit to monitor the property joint management body (JMB) or joint management community (JMC)'s implementation of its annual general meetings and financial reports.

"This system has the potential to revamp the administrative management of service delivery because it is more effective and systematic. Moreover, it is easy to be managed.

"All the information which is obtained from the

portal can assist in the planning, legislation and execution of policies by the Housing and Local Government Ministry, the Selangor Housing and Property Board (LPHS) and MBPJ in its development agenda as well as government transformation for the benefit of strata residents in Petaling Jaya," said Mohd Sayuthi in a statement.

He said to expand the portal's usage, the MBPJ's COB unit will organise three dedicated seminar series and exercises for the JMB and JMC to guide them on how to use it.

The eCOB web portal can be accessed via skep.lphs.gov.my/mbpj and more information can be obtained by contacting the unit at 03-79601646.

Council head calls for better amenities

SUBANG JAYA - Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) wants its forthcoming city status to complement its services to the people, said MPSJ president Noraini Roslan.

Noraini said her council, therefore, does not want any groups to be left behind including persons with different abilities (OKU).

She said a good city is a city that is accessible to all its residents.

"That is why we need to upgrade the pathways for OKU, which at the same time can be used by senior citizens, parents with prams as well as women.

"MPSJ prioritises such projects because not only does it make things easy for the residents but it also ensures their safety. As we gear towards the city status, these facilities should be given due considerations," she said during a media conference.

On June 25, 2020, *SelangorKini* reported that Subang Jaya's 'municipal council' status to 'city council' status will be enforced on Oct 20 after receiving the consent of Sultan of Selangor, Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj.

Last November, Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari had announced that Subang Jaya has succeeded in upgrading its status from MPSJ to MBSJ through a Ministry of Housing and Local Government letter on Oct 31, 2019.

Other than MPSJ, Kuala Langat has also been upgraded to municipal council status.

Currently, Selangor has two city councils — Shah Alam and Petaling Jaya — and seven municipal councils (Subang Jaya, Selayang, Ampang Jaya, Klang, Kajang, Sepang and Kuala Langat).

The district councils are Hulu Selangor, Sabak Bernam and Kuala Selangor.

MPSJ offers online licence renewals

SUBANG JAYA - The Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) is allowing applications for the renewal of licences and advertisements for low-risk businesses to be made online from now until Dec 31.

Its president Noraini Roslan (*pic*) said the 'counter zero' method is part of the new normal brought on by the Covid-19 outbreak.

"This would reduce the risk of infection that can happen in crowded spaces, as well as to avoid people being in close contact with each other during the reviewing and renewal processes.

"More than 80 per cent of the licence holders are categorised as low-risk, including eatery operators, business premises and offices," said Noraini during the council's full board meeting on Sept 30.

Applications for licence renewal can be made via the website www.mpsj.gov.my, while new applicants must first register with My@MPSJ.

"High-risk licence holders, such as night club operators, should renew their licence at the integrated counters with the standard operating procedure in place, from 8 am to 5.30 pm, Monday to Friday," she added.





We are now seeing the younger generation of Subang Jaya demanding for a more caring society with a 'friendlier council'

KESHMINDER SINGH

Subang Jaya Zone 5 councillor

Subang Jaya heralds a new era

By SHERILYN PANG

Subang Jaya is an area located in the heart of Selangor in the Petaling District — which is not to be confused with the city of Petaling Jaya.

After having successfully achieved certain criteria which include a total population that exceeds 500,000 and annual revenue exceeding RM100 million, Subang Jaya is ushering in the dawn of finally becoming a 'city' on Oct 20, 2020.

At present, the total population of all 24 zones in Subang Jaya is estimated at 970,000 and it is growing.

The councillor of Zone 5 (covering mainly Batu Tiga to the industrial area of Tropicana Metropark) Keshminder Singh has quite a lot to say about the residents and the community there that makes it one of the most successful and highly-developed townships in Malaysia.

"The people of Subang Jaya are very demanding in their call for public service but they always ask for what's best for the community," said Keshminder, adding that the dynamic population of Subang Jaya is the key towards the impressive growth story of the place.

"They are very concerned about what goes on in the community.

"Of course, there are a lot of public issues, but overall they are friendly people, well-mannered and all they want is to take care of their place well."

Progressive but polarised

From its historical past as an estate in the 1950s, and a township from the 1970s through to this day, Subang Jaya has undergone the growth stages of being a district in 1976 followed by a municipality in 1997 and now, welcoming its long-awaited 'city' status.

On top of that, Subang Jaya is an award-winning township that has bagged numerous awards in various categories, public and private alike, throughout the decades.

Its progressive infrastructure built by developers set on achieving high standards resulted in a bustling industrial and education hub that is home to a vibrant, multicultural population.

It continues to attract domestic and international investors, who see value in putting down roots there.

Son of the nation's political stalwart Karam Singh Veriah (Damanara MP from 1959-1964), Keshminder said his 12-year career in politics has allowed him to witness the rise of Subang Jaya, from a township with basic connectivity to the complex city that it is today.

"In the late 50s, it was either a rubber estate or a location for tin mining. People lived without paved streets and sufficient lighting but as the years went by, the Federal Highway and the Subang Airport were built. Then houses started popping up. Starting with property projects by Sime Darby Bhd followed by

Sunway Bhd joining in slightly later. That was how it all started and in close to 50 years, it is now a city," he recounted.

Despite the growth, the biggest challenge faced by Subang Jaya is the economic and social polarisation of its citizens, manifested in their savviness and attitude towards governance, community wellbeing and environmental issues.

"In Subang Jaya, the majority are middle-class families, with 20 per cent from the bottom-40 (B40) and 10 per cent from the upper class (T20) groups. The challenge we have now is to figure out how to bridge the gap of communication and connect these groups. The views of each group are distinctively different and sadly, this makes the race towards a better Subang Jaya slower. That's probably one problem that all politicians have to face," said Keshminder.

"Plus, with the Covid-19 pandemic, our progress in some areas may have been slightly hindered."

Strong leadership

In recent years, the council has managed to steer towards achieving a healthier financial standing, especially in raising the amount of reserves left from the previous administration and in helping the township keep a close tab of its spending.

"Our current president Noraini Roslan has managed to raise our funds dramatically in the last two years. From just RM10 million in



reserves, she has helped us save some money and increased the amount to RM90 million. That is quite a feat.

"She cut all unnecessary expenses and because of that, we are thankfully quite comfortable amidst this Covid-19 pandemic and will keep going on strong," Keshminder shared.

"Also, although we don't get much from the state government, we do receive annual budgets for roads from the Federal government. We contribute significantly to the Federal government, though," he said.

Subang Jaya spends one-third of its revenue on rubbish collection followed by infrastructure development and the maintenance of roads, public amenities and utilities. It is propelled by a 1,300-strong administrative personnel.

Hopes of a new generation

As for the future, Keshminder admitted that much is being requested by the people of Subang Jaya.

"A lot is expected by the residents. Some complain that there are no ramps for ease of movement for the disabled, they want crime-free lanes for wom-

en, CCTV surveillance, sufficient parking spaces, bicycle lanes, clean dry markets and even air-conditioned halls for gatherings and meetings. But the challenge now is Covid-19," he said.

"Because of Covid-19, our collection has been slashed by 20 per cent due to the new norms of compliance with social distancing, wearing of masks and an increasing unemployment rate," he added.

Becoming a city, however, means any obstacle in accessing education is reduced, making it possible to grow a learned population that will drive development further.

"We are now seeing the younger generation of Subang Jaya demanding for a more caring society with a 'friendlier council'. They want to see less waste, lower carbon emissions, better internet connectivity and zero corruption and abuse of power. They want more engagement with the leaders, have better playgrounds and a safe place for the elderly to enjoy their golden years, so these are the next steps for us.

"They are just passionately committed to seeing their community well taken care of and thrive."

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor football team is now known as the Selangor Football Club (Selangor FC) after the club's privatisation process was officially approved by the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) on Sept 29.

Selangor Football Association (FAS) secretary-general Dr Johan Kamal Hamidon said the team will still retain its logo that features a shield and the Selangor coat of arms emblazoned at the top.

He said the only change to the logo is the word 'association', which has been replaced with 'club'.

"The decision to continue using the existing logo for Selangor FC is because the logo is quite meaningful and symbolic, having long been associated with the Red Giants.

"It is also a symbol of courage and sovereignty that the Selangor

Selangor football team is now Selangor FC

team has and is not something that can be easily changed," he said in a statement on the official FAS portal on Oct 2.

Johan said Selangor will continue to operate and compete as FAS until the end of this season as league rules and regulations do not allow the transfer or exchange of entities when the tournament is in progress.

"All communications, branding and management under Selangor FC will officially start on Dec 1 in

line with the start of the new football season," he said.

Commenting on the privatisation of the team, Johan said FAS and Selangor FC will have different roles to play from here on.

"FAS will focus on the development of the Selangor grassroots while Selangor FC will strive to develop an elite football team and promote Selangor football at the professional level.

"FAS and Selangor FC will continue to work together even

though the two entities have different tasks. The main goal is to help each other to improve the state's football industry."

Johan said Selangor FC is now under the management of Red Giants FC Sdn Bhd which is owned by several shareholders including the Raja Muda of Selangor Tengku Amir Shah Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah (as the major shareholder), the Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS), Menteri Besar Incorporated (MBI) and FAS.



"However, this shareholding structure is not final as Red Giants FC Sdn Bhd is always open to accepting investors who are interested in becoming shareholders of the company," he added. - Bernama

Morale boost for Giants after 7-0 win



FB Selangor FC

KUALA LUMPUR - Selangor caretaker coach Michael Feichtenbeiner was extremely pleased with the performance of his charges who scored a thumping 7-0 victory against bottom side Police in a Super League match at the Kuala Lumpur Football Stadium in Cheras, here, on Oct 3.

The 60-year-old German said the second victory under his guidance would certainly boost the morale of the Red Giants squad for the last match against Felda United at the UiTM Stadium in Shah Alam on Oct 10.

"They did well in the first half like last week and we scored some nice goals in the first half.

"It was only during 15 minutes after the break that I was not happy with their performance but after the fourth goal, the players managed to find their

rhythm, and we got back our style of football," he told a post-match press conference.

Meanwhile, Police head coach Mohamad Ishak Kunju Mohamad was upset with the poor performance of his charges who conceded easily through their mistakes in the match.

"I accept this defeat with an open heart, but the only thing that makes me upset is that we conceded three to four easy goals to our opponents.

"If we had managed to avoid those mistakes, I don't think our team would have been humiliated with this heavy defeat. The first 15 minutes, we played well, then we conceded the first goal and the same mistakes kept happening," he said.

Mohamad Ishak added that he is now focusing on collecting at least three points against Petaling Jaya City FC at

the Petaling Jaya City Council Stadium in Kelana Jaya on Oct 10 to save the blushes as the team still failed to collect any points after 10 matches.

With their third win, the Red Giants jumped four slots to the fifth spot in the Super League table with 14 points after 10 games (three wins, five draws and two losses).

In the action on Oct 3, Selangor led 3-0 in the first half with goals from Ifedayo Olusegun Omosuyi in the 19th minute, and two from Sean Selvaraj in the 26th and 33rd minute.

In the second half, the Red Giants piled up four more goals via Brendan Gan in the 69th minute, Ifedayo (74th minute), Muhammad Safuwan Baharudin (80th minute) and Spanish import player, Rufino Segovia in the 83rd minute. - Bernama

No big events for this year: MAF

KUALA LUMPUR - The Malaysian Athletics Federation (MAF) is not keen on organising any major competitions for at least the next two months due to the recent spike in Covid-19 cases in the country.

MAF president Datuk S. M. Muthu said that they might, instead, decide at their annual general meeting on Oct 24 to hold smaller competitions — for events like jumping, running and throwing — as a way to keep the athletes in good shape for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics qualifiers.

World Athletics has announced that the qualification period for athletes who have yet to qualify for the Tokyo Olympics will be from Dec 21, 2020, to June 29, 2021, now that the world's biggest multi-sport Games have been postponed to July 23, 2021.

The MAF, who had previously planned to host a closed-door meet in October, said they do not want another incident like the one that national hammer thrower Jackie Wong experienced when he became the first Malaysian athlete to be infected with the Covid-19 virus in March, forcing him to be warded in the Sibuh Hospital for more than 70 days.

"We are not prepared to take risks by organising tournaments as these will involve many individuals, ranging from athletes to coaches and technical officials. Maybe, we will organise separate competitions based on events.

"If the situation permits, we plan to hold two domestic competitions in the first half of next year for our athletes to prepare for the Tokyo qualifiers and Vietnam SEA Games in November," he said on Sept 27. - Bernama

FLATTENING THE COVID-19 CURVE

The Selangor government has introduced six preventive measures to curb the spread of Covid-19:



COVID-19 OPERATION ROOM EXTENDS HOURS

The operation centre based at the Selangor State Secretariat building will now run until 7pm



FREE TARGETED SCREENING

Available for those with travel history to Sabah between Sept 20 and 26



NO LATE NIGHTS FOR EATERIES WITH PUBS

All such premises only allowed to open until 11pm, effective Oct 3



AN ENHANCED SELANGKAH

Introducing new features, including maps and checks for high-risk premises



PROTECTING THE INCARCERATED

Four temporary detention centres have been set up for illegal immigrants



LIMITING ASSEMBLY

Gathering in groups are discouraged and a maximum of 250 people is the new limit

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