



# SELANGOR JOURNAL

# For lives and livelihoods

**O**n Nov 26, the state government will table its first 'post-pandemic' budget — the 2022 Selangor Budget — amidst a backdrop of good fiscal management and a reopening economy. Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari has hinted that the budget will be a fine balance between bolstering financial resilience and ensuring the people's welfare.

Preparations for the budget have been organised and fair, with state

representatives from both sides of the divide receiving briefings and a chance to hand in their proposals more than a month before the event.

"In a gist, we want to increase revenue and focus on education and assistance programmes for those affected by the pandemic," Amirudin said during a town hall session on Oct 9.

MORE ON PAGES **2, 3, 8 & 9**



# Budget of essentials

By **SITI ROHAIZAH ZAINAL**

**SHAH ALAM** - The 2022 Selangor Budget will focus on increasing the state's revenue, education opportunities and initiatives to assist those affected

by Covid-19.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the state government also wants to ensure the budget would boost the economic sector.

"We will try to provide the es-

entials needed for the people to return to normalcy after the Covid-19 pandemic.

"In a gist, we want to increase revenues and focus on education and assistance programmes for those affected by

the pandemic," he said during the 2022 Selangor Budget town hall session, here, on Oct 9.

He also gave his assurance that proposals from state representatives will be taken into consideration to be included in the

budget which is currently in the final phase of planning.

"We are now in the final phase and there is around one month left, but there is still time to make several arrangements," he said.

## Subang MRO gets special mention

**SHAH ALAM** - The Federal government will provide RM80 million to the International Trade and Industry Ministry to fulfil the need for skills in the high value-added activity industries.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Tengku Abdul Aziz said this will be used to train 20,000 workers to support industrial clusters including Maintenance, Repair and Operations (MRO) in Subang, Electrical and Electronics (E&E) in Kulim and Chemistry in Gebeng.

In addition, RM50 million will also be provided via state skill development centres, namely in Sarawak, Johor and Penang.

He said this is meant to improve Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) skills for 5,000 workers in oil and gas welding, industrial automation, and the mechatronics sectors.

"I had a chance to meet Kamarul Muhamed, the founder of Aerodyne Group based in Cyberjaya, and I am very amazed by the development of this Bumiputera company.

"Aerodyne was established in 2014 with only three employees. Today, Aerodyne has grown exponentially and is ranked as the world's largest company in the drone technology services industry.

"Therefore, to further boost the involvement of local players in the industry, a matching grant worth RM100 million will be provided to the Bumiputera Small and Medium Entrepreneurs to explore opportunities in the aerospace sector," Tengku Zafrul said when tabling Budget 2022 in the Dewan Rakyat on Oct 29.

On April 13, the Selangor state government through the Selangor Technical Skills Development Centre (STDC) formed a strategic partnership with Malaysian-based drone services company Aerodyne Group (Aerodyne) to develop specialised skills training for job seekers, focusing on developing drone and data experts in the state.

In the wake of Covid-19 with more people losing their jobs, the state administration embarked on an opportune chance to upskill and reskill its workforce, and help individuals rise to their potential.

Kamarul told Selangor Journal how the company plans to play a part in creating more skilled talents in the DT3 — drone tech, data tech and digital transformation — industry.

"Much like the Selangor government, Aerodyne hopes to see more quality talent in the field," he said.

## 10,000 travel vouchers snapped up

**SHAH ALAM** - A total of 10,000 Kita Selangor 2.0 tourism vouchers — worth RM100 each — have been fully redeemed through the Shopee app, said Tourism Selangor chief executive officer Azrul Shah Mohamad.

He said he is satisfied with the overwhelmingly positive response for the vouchers, which were made available to the public on Oct 22, even though the redemption period is open until Dec 31.

"All of the vouchers have been fully redeemed, and I am confident they will be utilised as we

can see the trend of people going out for holidays with their families after interstate travel was permitted again," Azrul Shah told *SelangorKini*.

He reminded the public to continue adhering to standard operating procedures during leisure time with the family.

Some 170 travel packages were offered through 35 agencies for the vouchers. The vouchers allowed limited purchase under one transaction, and cannot be replaced with other products.

The RM2.55 million initiative is part of the Kita Selangor 2.0

Package launched by exco for tourism Hee Loy Sian. It is one of the efforts carried out by the state government to boost Selangor's tourism activities due to the movement control order's negative impact on the industry.

On Dec 18 last year, the state government launched a Tourism Vouchers Subsidy Redemption programme worth RM200 each.

For this round, the 10,000 vouchers can be used to purchase overnight stays at hotels and homestays, and tickets for entry into theme parks and other tourist attractions.



**Rodziah (in pink) with the recipients of the Sitham programme in Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor, on Oct 11 - Photo HAFIZ OTHMAN/SELANGORKINI**

## Sitham offers new opportunities

**SHAH ALAM** - Over 2,000 individuals have joined the Selangor Indian Entrepreneur Development (Sitham) programme so far, said the exco of entrepreneur development Rodziah Ismail.

She said the participants are involved in four areas — entrepreneur development training, skills and manufacturing courses, business guidance, and busi-

ness equipment assistance.

"We opened it online for new registrations in March and received over 700 applications. The selection was made as soon as possible, since the programme can fill job opportunities and open up business fields, either on an individual basis or among the participants," Rodziah said.

She was speaking at the handover ceremony of appreciation

certificates and business equipment assistance at the foyer of the State Secretariat Building on Oct 15.

Sitham was launched in September 2019, and focuses on Indian entrepreneurs who are committed to developing their own businesses, with guidance, grants, and the necessary equipment provided by the state government.



# Finding the perfect balance

By **ALANG BENDAHARA**

**SHAH ALAM** - People in Selangor can expect a balanced state budget that focuses on development and welfare.

With less than a month to go before the 2022 Selangor Budget is tabled in the State Legislative Assembly on Nov 26, those close to the administration said a balanced

budget is to be expected.

A balanced budget occurs when revenue is equal to, or greater than, total expenses.

It is expected that some expansion plans will also be announced in the post-pandemic recovery budget, likely on workers' housing.

Youths will also become a focus aside from education, and programmes for the ageing pop-

ulation will continue to be implemented.

On Aug 19 Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari hinted that the budget will seek to find the perfect balance between development and welfare following the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We will try to find the perfect balance in both of the elements, post-pandemic," he said.

Amirudin said the welfare of the people has been one of the state administration's areas of focus during the pandemic and has now become one of its top priorities.

"(Due to the pandemic), there are people in the M40 group who have fallen into the B40 category. At the same time, the B40 group may be swelling up to become

B50 or B60 categories.

"We need to carry out a detailed analysis on this ... We will continue to strengthen and enhance the welfare of the people in the state."

He also said that the state government would reveal its plan to jumpstart economic activities for the financial sector, focusing on several aspects such as addressing employment issues.

## All state reps briefed on allocation

**SHAH ALAM** - All state representatives are involved in the preparation of the 2022 Selangor Budget, says the Menteri Besar.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the approach to this year's town hall sessions differ from previous years' as different

groups meet separately to discuss the budget.

"Today, the session is specifically with the state assemblymen to give them an overview of the budget. They are going to give their proposals and thus need to know the state government's current situation and

actual allocation, and subsequently they can give their proposals," he said when met at the 2022 Selangor Budget town hall session here on Oct 8.

On Oct 15, an engagement session was also held with the state's opposition and independent representatives.

Amirudin said the session, which took place at the Concorde Hotel, was to discuss a more constructive budget that will benefit the people of Selangor.

The discussion was attended by Kuang assemblyman Sallehuddin Aminuddin, Sijangkang

assemblyman Dato' Dr Ahmad Yunus Hairi, Teratai assemblyman Lai Wai Chong, and Selangor Opposition representative Mohd Zaim Tawfek.

When contacted, Sallehuddin said the handling of illegal factories was among the issues discussed.

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# Over RM1 billion spent on welfare

By **SITI ROHAIZAH ZAINAL**

**SHAH ALAM** - The state government has spent approximately RM1.1 billion through its welfare packages to aid the rakyat in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic over the past two years, said Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

These include two economic stimulus packages, the Kita Selangor package, as well as the Se-

langor Economic Recovery Plan.

Amirudin said tens of thousands of families have benefited from these initiatives, with the food basket programme among the most notable.

"Based on the reports from assemblymen and coordinators, over 91,000 families have received the food baskets funded by the state government via the economic packages," Amirudin said during the Selangor Budget

2022 briefing session at Wyndham Hotel in Klang on Oct 9.

He added that the Selangor government has also announced several mega projects in the state budget for 2022, so as to provide investment space, infrastructural amenities, and employment opportunities.

"This is important, as the rakyat also wish to see how the government can stimulate the economic sector, which has been

affected for over eight months of the movement control order," Amirudin said.

In March last year, the Menteri Besar announced the Selangor Cares Package worth RM127.78, which benefited frontliners, traders, and university students.

The package's second phase was announced on April 1 last year, worth RM272 million and aimed at softening Covid-19's impact. This was followed by

the Economic Recovery Plan at RM55.8 million on July 13.

On Jan 20 this year, the Kita Selangor package worth RM73.87 million was introduced to alleviate the people's burden in dealing with MCO 2.0.

The same package was once again announced on June 9 worth RM551.6, to aid low-income groups, students, small traders, farmers, and tourism industry operators.

## Shah Alam gets tough on plastics

**SHAH ALAM** - Shah Alam has been chosen as the pioneer city for a collaboration project on preventing single-use plastic usage in Southeast Asia.

The recognition from the Malaysian Green Technology Corporation (MGTC) is based on a set of criteria which includes the availability of target groups, businesses, industries, and the government's commitment.

Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) Corporate Department head Shahrin Ahmad said the council is consistent in its efforts to curb the usage of single-use plastics in all sectors and in daily life.

"MBSA is directly involved in various campaigns to curb the use of plastics in all departments and state government agencies. The campaigns include the drive

to prevent single-use plastic usage, a plastic-free campaign and a plastic straw-free campaign.

"We also carry out a recycling programme, encouraging the separation of waste in homes, and have set up community recycling centres," he said in a statement on Oct 6.

On Oct 5, MBSA and MGTC together with German agency Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit organised a webinar session to discuss avoiding the use of plastics in conjunction with Shah Alam's anniversary celebration.

Among the paperwork presented during the session include a collaborative action plan to prevent the usage of single-use plastics in Southern Asia, as well as Shah Alam's waste direction.

## Volunteers train as health envoys

**SELAYANG** - More than 1,000 individuals have enrolled in the Selangor Health Community Volunteers (Suka) programme to help the state government carry out public health activities, especially those related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Selangor Menteri Besar said the volunteers come from the state's 56 constituencies, are over 18, and in good health.

According to Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, the group was trained and enrolled in courses related to the appropriate modules online, since they do not possess medical knowledge.

"We will also conduct face-to-face learning to provide

them with more knowledge. This will make it easier for them to assist the community.

"RM1.2 million has been allocated to the programme, and each state constituency receives RM18,000 to run beneficial activities. We want to be a developed and healthy state," he said after launching the programme on Oct 14.

Amirudin said since its introduction in August, Suka had been involved in several activities, including providing vehicles to ferry Covid-19 patients, undertaking the disinfection process, checking on quarantined individuals, and working at vaccination centres.

"Suka will also organise lo-

cal programmes that can form a healthy community through physical and mental wellbeing.

"As an entity that is close to the community, Suka is also responsible as a special ambassador to promote the Selangor government's programmes and initiatives," he said.

Selangor has launched several programmes to safeguard the health of the population, especially during the Covid-19 outbreak.

Among them is the establishment of the Special Task Force for Covid-19, the community screening and Selangor Vaccination Programme (Selvax) and the provision of free Covid-19 self-test kits.

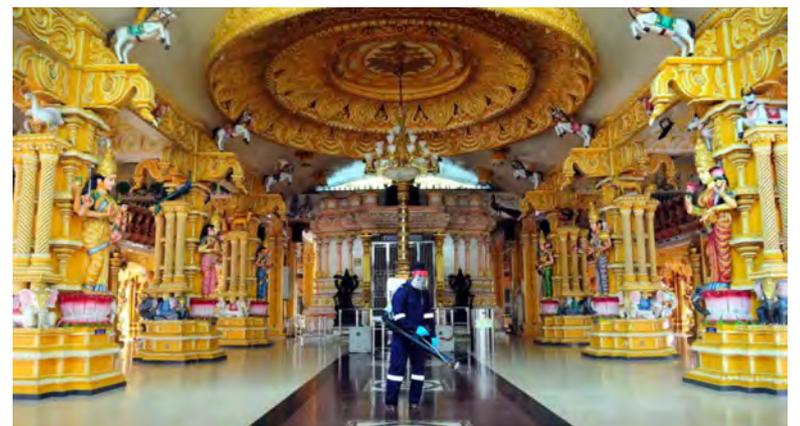
## Temples welcome the faithful for Deepavali

**SHAH ALAM** - Hindus in Selangor who have been fully vaccinated will be permitted to participate in prayers at temples for Deepavali.

However attendance is limited to 50 per cent of the temple's size and capacity, said the chairman of the Selangor Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and Taoist Special Committee (Limas) V Ganabatirau.

He said the standard operating procedures (SOPs) which the National Unity Ministry has agreed to, does not allow for children under the age of 12 to attend.

"If the building can accommodate 100 people, then only 50 will be allowed. The temple's management must play a role



**A cleaner disinfectants Kuil Sri Maha Mariamman in Shah Alam ahead of Deepavali — Picture by BERNAMA**

in advising the people properly, for collective safety," he said in a press conference on Oct 25.

Ganabatirau also reminded all Hindus to be cautious when celebrating Deepavali, by observing the SOPs and in so doing, avert-

ing a Deepavali Covid-19 cluster.

"Do not regard the SOPs as troublesome. We must remember that all the guidelines that have been issued are not for anyone else's interests but yours and your loved ones," he said.

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# A winning formula not based on race

By SITI ROHAIZAH ZAINAL

**KLANG** - All initiatives by the state government in assisting the rakyat are based on justice for all races and society as a whole, said Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

He said since being given the chance to rule the state in 2008, the main policy of the state government is not to use skin colour, groups or communities when making decisions.

"We want to see all layers of society live together, and enjoy the advancements that everyone wants.

"In the 12 years of administering the state, this is the formula that binds us with the people of Selangor; without bias for any particular race," Amirudin said during the launch of Jelajah Deepavali KEADILAN Selangor at the Sentosa community service centre on Oct 25.

He cited several of the initia-



tives implemented by the state government, including the Skim Mesra Usia Emas, Kasih Ibu Smart Selangor, and Kad Peduli Sihat.

"All of these do not use race or skin colour for reference. For schools, we also focus on what they need and give adequate funding to both religious schools and Chinese and Tamil

vernacular schools.

"We also made allocations to develop mosques and suraus, as well as create policies via the Selangor Buddhist, Christian, Hindu, Sikh, and Taoist Special Committee, which handles all issues regarding land ownership for building temples and places of worship," Amirudin said.

## Hulu Selangor elevated to municipal status

**SHAH ALAM** - The Hulu Selangor District Council (MDHS) has officially upgraded to the Hulu Selangor Municipal Council (MPHS) starting Oct 21.

The declaration was made by Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, after the Sultan of Selangor Sultan Sharafuddin Idris Shah Alhaj granted as-

sent. Amirudin said this will enable Hulu Selangor to receive more investment, besides giving its local tourism and manufacturing sectors a boost.

He said the change will also have a positive impact on lo-

cals, as the municipality moves towards becoming a sustainable and resilient urban area.

"Hulu Selangor will be managed as a municipality with an equivalent delivery system. In addition, the standards and efficiency must be in accordance with its new status.

"This new status also increases the hopes and expectations of various parties.

"All employees must address the challenges ahead and mobilise efforts to strengthen the quality of service for the people," Amirudin said in a speech



during the declaration that was broadcast on MDHS's Facebook page.

Meanwhile, MPHS president Mohd Hasry Nor Mohd said the new status that was achieved after years of hard work should become the pride of the Hulu Selangor people because it is a benchmark for the development of the district.

"All residents will remember this moment with pride as it will go down in history.

"However, there will definitely be challenges to face. Let us renew our commitment to implement sustainable development," he said.

At the ceremony, MPHS also launched its new official logo and a song entitled 'Hulu Selangor Terus Maju'.

## 5G connectivity for high-density areas

**SHAH ALAM** - Selangor has been selected by the Federal government as one of several states where 5G service will be further expanded in high-density areas to reduce the digital gap.

Finance Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz said this is part of Budget 2022's initiative to prepare 5G services for the country.

"For 2022, 5G service will be expanded to 36 per cent of high-density areas, including in the main cities of Johor, Selangor, Penang, Sabah, and Sarawak," he said during the tabling of the budget in the Dewan Rakyat on Oct 29.

Tengku Zafrul said the service is expected to draw a new technological landscape and offer users a better and faster experience, in addition to creating new job opportunities and closing the digital gap.

Other initiatives related to digitalisation under Budget 2022 include the National Digital Net-

work (Jendela) plan, with the Federal government allocating RM700 million to increase digital connectivity efforts in 47 industrial areas and 630 schools, particularly outside of urban areas.

Similarly, to ensure that the residents of People's Housing Project low-cost flats would not be left behind, the minister said RM30 million will be allocated to prepare Internet amenities in 40 existing PPRs.

In early September, Tengku Zafrul announced the Federal government's objective to ensure that 80 per cent of Malaysia will eventually receive 5G network coverage so that the country will be able to take advantage of the megatrends of tomorrow in both the mid- and long-term.

He said Putrajaya also aspires to accelerate 5G coverage development to be affordable, reliable, and high-speed, which will bring about numerous socio-economic benefits for Malaysians.

## 12MP: 98 flood projects approved

**SHAH ALAM** - A total of 98 flood mitigation projects involving an allocation of RM533 million under the 12th Malaysia Plan (RMK12) have been approved, says the Menteri Besar.

According to Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, one of the projects, the Sungai Buloh Flood Mitigation Plan (RTB) Phase 1, is currently being implemented.

"A total of 78 projects with an allocation of RM425.33 million under the 11MP have been completed, while 98 more projects have been approved under the 12MP with an allocation of RM533 million.

"For projects under the 12MP, a total of RM440 million has been channelled and one of the 98 projects — the Sungai Buloh RTB Phase 1 project — has been implemented," he said via his social media accounts Facebook and Twitter on Oct 8.

Apart from that, Amiru-

din said the state has applied for an additional allocation of RM1.3 billion to implement five RTB projects to address climate change issues and recurring floods.

"The Selangor Drainage and Irrigation Department has made an application for an additional RM1.3 billion to build five more RTB projects," he said.

The five RTB projects are as follows:

- RTB Sungai Kapar Kecil and Sungai Kapar (Meru and Klang)
- RTB Sungai Langat Phase 2 (Sepang, Hulu Langat and Kuala Langat)
- RTB Sungai Buloh Phase 2 (Petaling and Kuala Selangor)
- RTB Anak Sungai Udang Phase 2 (Selayang and Gombak)
- RTB Sungai Kundang (Bandar Baru Kundang and Rawang)

# Aviation's best come together

By **NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI**

**SHAH ALAM** - The Selangor Aviation Show 2021 (SAS 2021) is expected to draw at least 5,000 visitors during its three-day run from Nov 25 to 27 at the SkyPark Regional Aviation Centre in Subang.

The inaugural event will see the participation of 43 exhibitors — representing the world's

best in the aerospace and aviation industries — who will be displaying their exhibits either on the tarmac or in booths at the venue.

The participating exhibitors include Embraer from Brazil, Dassault Aviation (France), ATS Turbine (United States of America), Swiss Aviation (Switzerland) and Turkish Aerospace Industries (Turkey).

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari has encouraged the business and general aviation industry to work with the state government, and to support the aviation show.

"Put aside the uncertainties and pessimism, grab the opportunity that SAS 2021 presents as a reset button for the industry, as we have started to recover from the pandemic,"

he said.

With 'Selangor, the Asean Business and General Aviation Hub' as the theme, the aviation show is designed as another forward-thinking initiative by the state for all relevant stakeholders to establish networks, hold dialogue sessions as well as share their know-how related to the industry.

Interested trade visitors may

plan to visit the SAS 2021 on all three days of the show whereas the public and students are encouraged to attend on the final day.

Visitors are required to register and select their day of visit at [selangoraviationshow.com](http://selangoraviationshow.com).

More information is available on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn: @selangoraviationshow.

## Selangor wants to nurture more e-merchants

**SHAH ALAM** - Despite the uncertainties posed by Covid-19, Selangor is intent on nurturing more e-commerce merchants in the state.

State executive councillor for industry and trade Dato' Teng Chang Khim said programmes implemented by Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) have helped many e-commerce merchants survive during the pandemic.

"Since the Covid-19 outbreak last year, many sectors have been struggling to make ends meet due to the various interruptions caused by the restrictions of movement, which has halted business operations and the operations of the whole supply chain including for e-commerce businesses.

"However, I am glad to see that many merchants are taking up all available opportunities to level up their businesses and come back stronger through the many initiatives provided by the (Selangor) state government.

"Selangor, through its state government agency Sidec, has implemented various programmes to continuously nurture e-commerce merchants in the state," said Teng during the virtual launching ceremony of the Malaysia Top E-Commerce Merchant Awards (Top ECM) 2021 on Oct 15.

Teng said Top ECM as well as other initiatives carried out by Sidec such as the Selangor SME Digitalisation Matching Grant and the Selangor Accelerator Programme (SAP) have contributed to the economic growth of the state.

He said shortlisted Top ECM participants this year will stand a chance to walk away with cash prizes worth RM40,500 and other attractive prizes from the four categories of awards, namely the Top E-Commerce Merchant Awards, the Online 100 and Brands 100 Merchant Awards, the Selangor E-Bazar Merchant

Awards, and the Affin Bank Rising Star Awards.

As for the Selangor SME Digitalisation Matching Grant which was first introduced this year, Teng said it is expected to benefit 1,000 small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the state with an initial grant of RM5 million.

He said the initiative aims to assist SMEs to digitalise their businesses to improve and sustain their sales.

"For the first batch, we have managed to disburse RM1.2 million to 280 SMEs out of 492 applicants. While for the second batch, RM1.6 million has been disbursed to 370 applicants," he said

With RM2.2 million left to be handed out, he said SMEs should not miss this opportunity to digitalise their businesses.

"Therefore, I encourage SMEs to apply for this grant as digitalisation is definitely the way to ensure the survival of businesses," he said.

This year's SAP, which ended last month, saw 30 competitive and innovative startups from various industries focusing on Agritech, Fintech, Greentech, e-Commerce and Smart City Solutions.

The SAP is a structured three-month programme to help its participants polish up their products and services as well as to prepare them in becoming investment-ready.

Teng said to date, 120 startups have already been nurtured through this programme which is now into its fourth year.

"I am definitely glad to have witnessed the growth of the economy brought about by these various initiatives carried out so far.

"It is my hope that businesses in the state continue to grow exponentially and continue to tremendously contribute to the GDP (Gross Domestic Product)."



## Green plan for factories

**SHAH ALAM** - Selangor will be the first state in Malaysia to develop an industrial park that requires participating factories to build a Centralised Wastewater Treatment Facility to treat the effluents they release, said the Menteri Besar.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said Invest Selangor Bhd is in the process of refining the concept — one that is based on an incentive mechanism — to ensure that Selangor is on par with other developed counties in the area of industrial park management.

The move is part of the Selangor government's efforts to preserve and conserve the environment, said Amirudin.

"Based on its identity as a developed state and an industrial-oriented economic power, the Selangor government also welcomes investors who use the 'circular economy' model of production to recycle waste into useful products.

It allows for natural resources to be recycled and will reduce the need to use new resources," he said in his speech when officiating the 2021 National Environment Day celebration that was held

online on Oct 22.

Amirudin said to ensure the environmental ecosystem is always protected, the state has set up a Standing Committee on Environmental Action chaired by Hee Loy Sian, which is responsible for any state development proposals and projects.

He explained that the Selangor government has also adapted 17 sustainable development goals in accordance with the United Nations's Voluntary Sub-National Review report.

"Selangor has also allocated RM360 million in the 2021 Budget for its water resources. We also gazetted the Selangor Water Management Authority (Amendment) Enactment 2020, the Raw Water Guarantee Scheme, and identified 44 sites that are under the watch of Friends of Rivers and members of the community.

"Local councils (PBTs) are also actively involved in implementing the smart city and low-carbon city programmes to minimise the effects of global warming and climate change," he said.

## Cheaper homes for city folk

**SHAH ALAM** - The state government will be collaborating with property developers to build more affordable housing in the city areas to help the people, especially those in the B40 and M40 groups, buy their own homes.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said it is working with property developers LBS Bina Group and MGB Berhad to develop Rumah Idaman projects in Bandar Saujana Putra, Shah Alam, Puchong, CyberSouth, and Bandar Puncak Alam.

Priced at RM250,000, each Rumah Idaman house is 1,000 square foot in size and comes with three bedrooms, two bathrooms, two parking spaces, a television, a refrigerator and a cabinet.

"Rumah Idaman is easily accessible via major highways and surrounded by facilities like hospitals, schools and public transportation. We hope the project will

offer the people of Selangor a more meaningful life," Amirudin said in a Facebook post on Oct 27.

On Oct 4, The Selangor State Development Corporation (PKNS) also announced its intention to build more affordable homes for people living in the fringes of the cities to allow them to be closer to public facilities.

"If we build affordable houses in rural areas and far from the city centre, not many people will live there, and the project will be wasted," said its chief executive officer Datuk Mahmud Abbas.

"Therefore, I suggest that PKNS build more affordable houses near the Light Rail Transits (LRT) and commercial lots for the people to start a business there," he added.

For further information about Rumah Idaman, visit [www.platselangor.com](http://www.platselangor.com).

By NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI

The Selangor government-backed conference and exhibition series, the Selangor International Business Summit (SIBS) 2021, is back again this year, bringing together an assembly of prominent industry players from Malaysia and around the world.

With the theme 'Selangor the Gateway to Asean', the event will take place from Nov 18 to 21 in a hybrid format. The physical event will span across 13,000 square metres at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and will feature about 500 booths, while its virtual form can be accessed via [www.selangorbusinesshub.my](http://www.selangorbusinesshub.my) and will showcase about 800 booths.

As the organiser, Invest Selangor Berhad (Invest Selangor) has compelling reasons why it has chosen to hold a business event of this scale amidst the backdrop of a pandemic.

In an interview with *Selangor Journal*, Invest Selangor chief executive officer Datuk Hasan Azhari Idris said with the current global health and economic challenges, Selangor's aim is to ensure fast economic recovery while minimising the risk of another outbreak.

"Being the major economic engine of the country, Selangor is taking the lead in pushing for a jumpstart to Malaysia and the region's economic growth.

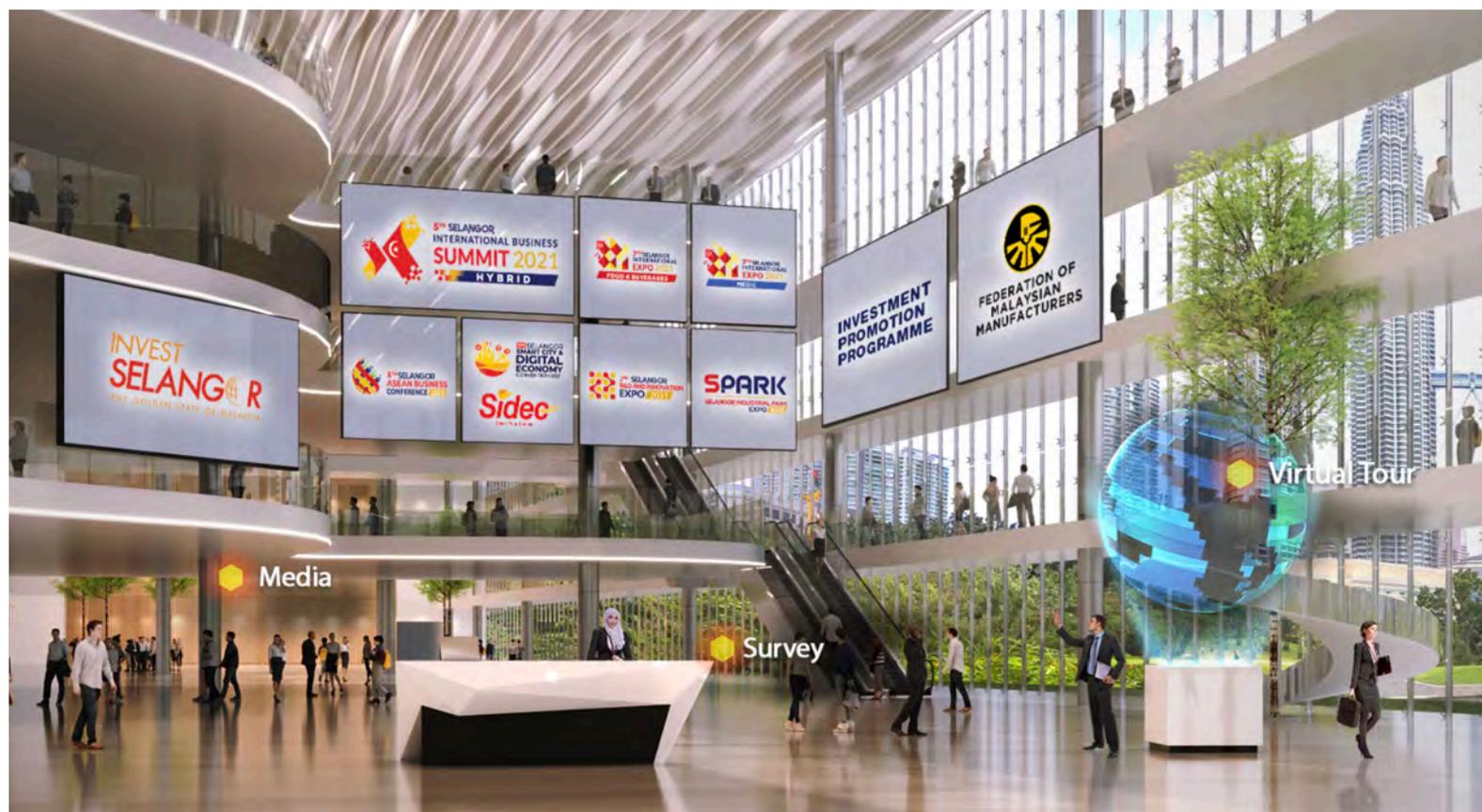
"Even before the pandemic happened, SIBS had already functioned as a great platform to bring together global brands and congregate industry players from around the world.

"This year's edition hopes to provide networking opportunities for its local and international participants," he said, adding: "We strongly feel that continuous efforts to connect local businesses to new markets are essential to ensure many of these businesses will survive the pandemic and rise again sooner than later."

#### Tried and tested

SIBS 2021 will feature dedicated expos on four main sectors, namely food & beverage; medical products and services; research & development and innovation; and industrial parks.

The event will also conduct conferences and talks onsite on topics on Asean; innovation; smart city and the digital econ-



# SIBS 2021: The spark to jumpstart the economy

omy; vaccination; aged-care; industrial parks' operations and others.

Hasan Azhari explained that last year, SIBS 2020 had tested out its virtual format for the first time via its food & beverage expo, and "we were not sure how the audience would accept it".

However, it garnered some 286 exhibitors from 12 countries and chalked up 282 online meetings involving 76 buyers from 24 countries.

The meetings generated approximately RM1 million worth of sales. As for the conference events, they recorded a total of 175,000 digital viewers.

"For this year's SIBS," said Hasan Azhari, "we are pushing for all nine programmes to be held in both physical and virtual formats so that more activities and networking can take place."

#### Out of our comfort zones

Among the list of events that will be showcased, the 5th Selangor Asean Business Conference stands out as an opportunity for its participants to

discuss key economic issues affecting Asean countries in the light of a post-pandemic world.

The theme, 'Sustaining Growth within Asean through Innovation' is aptly chosen to highlight the need to step out of our comfort zones in order to reinvigorate businesses.

Said Hasan Azhari: "The outbreak has restricted physical movement and the enforcement of lockdowns has pushed the domicile to stay at home. At one end of the spectrum are its adverse effects visible on the overall economies, but at the other end, it was a testing time where 'survival of the fittest' became a new norm. Eventually, only the innovative ones survived the overwhelming crisis."

SIBS is also proud to introduce two new events this year — the Selangor International Expo (SIE Medic) and the Selangor Industrial Park Expo (Spark) 2021.

"The idea to include a life sciences sector in SIBS came about a few years ago," said Hassan Azhari.

"This sector contributed to a quarter of Selangor's total manufacturing Gross Domes-

tic Product at a total of RM13.9 billion. In addition, Selangor's rich biodiversity provides a solid foundation for the biotechnology industry, offering abundant business opportunities, particularly in research & development."

Meanwhile, Spark 2021 will be showcasing Selangor as the preferred destination for investment in the region.

"Over the years, we have managed to attract key investments into the country and the state. Invest Selangor believes that it is crucial to bolster the aftercare aspects of its services to foreign investors to restore confidence and retain their presence.

"We believe in providing the best services to our current and potential investors in the state. And it is key for us to ensure that the facilitation process will not stop once the investors decide to invest in the state."

#### Providing the best experience

As the event draws closer, there are expectations to meet. Hasan Azhari said from the feedback they received last year,

many exhibitors have expressed their appreciation for the virtual events.

"But once business events are allowed to convene again, SIBS 2021 will be able to provide effective face-to-face relationship building as well as product sampling. As we all know, trade expos are meant to offer exhibitors the opportunity to introduce their products and brands and meet new customers."

Hasan Azhari added that they are also working to improve the virtual experience of their trade visitors.

"We are happy to also inform that the portal will be open to everyone for a year, starting from November 2021 until October 2022, thus providing continuous opportunities for our participants to utilise SIBS as their digital reference and platform to do business in the region.

"We hope that our visitors will have more flexibility when they wish to review particular sessions at their preferred timing.

"We also hope that this will attract new visitors to our portal and simultaneously retain our exhibitors and buyers."

By ALANG BENDAHARA

As Malaysia reemerges from the Covid-19 shroud, the Golden State of Selangor prepares to present a post-pandemic 2022 Budget slated for tabling at the State Legislative Assembly on Nov 26. In anticipation of this, *Selangor Journal* speaks to an academican and an economist on the formula that has previously worked, and on what to expect from Malaysia's economic powerhouse.

**Attracting the right kind of investment is very important, as the state can no longer depend on its labour-intensive manufacturing industry. Focus should be on the services-based industry and possibly the agro-food industry**

Associate Professor  
Dr Ahmed Razman  
Abdul Latiff,  
Putra Business School

Business development manager and Associate Professor Dr Ahmed Razman Abdul Latiff from the Putra Business School thinks Selangor should have multiple areas of focus in its upcoming budget.

"The budget focus should be on several areas, such as in ensuring that no individual or group is left out from receiving Covid-19 related assistance, kickstarting the state economy by ensuring a smooth recovery process especially for micro and small- and medium-entrepreneurs (SMEs) and embarking on attracting sustainable investments to the state," he said.

Ahmed Razman added that the state should also be more aggressive in creating more opportunities for its citizens to embrace new economies. The digital economy, the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and other creative industries must be explored.

Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd chief economist Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said the Selangor government should maintain its expansionary stand in order to allow a more consistent economic recovery going into 2022 and beyond.

"It would be wise to maintain an expansionary fiscal policy as the economic recovery is still preliminary and vulnerable to any shocks. At the moment, there seems



The budget should focus on better internet coverage for the people, says Afzanizam

to be a concern on rising inflationary pressures following the supply bottleneck globally," he said.

#### THE PEOPLE'S WISHLIST

Afzanizam said what the people want are cash transfers, business grants and microfinancing.

He said these will continue to be relevant as Selangor citizens, especially those who are still reeling from Covid-19, are still highly dependent on assistance for their own recovery. "Beyond financial aid, skills upgrading via training as well as job matching are also critically important as capacity building is always good for long-term benefits," he added.

Ahmed Razman agreed that the Selangor people want more upskilling and reskilling opportunities to get higher paying jobs since the cost of living keeps increasing each year.

He said there is a concern that the urban poor population is increasing, as well as the income gap between those living in urban and rural areas.

"Therefore, attracting the right kind of investment is very important,

# Hopes for a brave and resilient budget



Ahmed Razman says Selangor would be wise to invest in urban farming

as the state can no longer depend on its labour-intensive manufacturing industry. Focus should now be on the services-based industry and possibly the agro-food industry that specialises in urban farming.

"If the state government can attract this kind of investment and embark on these types of industries, the rakyat will be able to increase their income through high skilled and high paying jobs," he said.

#### A DIGITAL FUTURE

Afzanizam said the state's focus on digitalisation should be continued as it is here for the long haul.

"Several areas that will always be the mainstay in respect to digitalisation are the ownership of smart devices, affordability in internet subscription, and data speed and coverage," he said.

Ahmed Razman said digitalisation is very much relevant as a report by the United Nations titled 'World Digital Economy Report 2021' highlighted that digitalisation is being embraced by all the world's economies.

"In order to attain competitive-

ness and improve communications and networking within the states in the country, digitalisation should remain the main focus or thrust in next year's budget," he said.

#### THE RIGHT FOCUS

The Selangor Menteri Besar, Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari, has said that the 2022 Budget will focus on increasing the state's revenue, on education and also initiatives to assist those affected by Covid-19.

Ahmed Razman said it is wise for Selangor to make that focus.

"The state should continue to allocate aid packages to help micro and SMEs to grow. It is important to continue to assist them as it takes time for a business to start generating revenue like before.

"Emphasis should be given to the kind of assistance that will ensure the sustainability of the businesses instead of a one-off assistance," he said.

On revenue matters, Afzanizam said the state's income will be closely correlated with the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth.

"Given the improvement in global trade, Selangor will stand to benefit and eventually be able to collect more taxes," he said.

As for education, he commended Selangor's focus on entrepreneurship training.

"More training on entrepreneurship should be encouraged, especially when digitalisation is at the forefront of every business now."

Afzanizam also said grants and microfinancing will help these micro and SMEs to navigate their business, especially in areas relating to working capital.

#### CHECKS AND BALANCES

Both experts agreed that the budget must concentrate on providing aid to those whose livelihood is affected by Covid-19.

"The welfare programmes should be continued as there are many people in need of assistance and the number of unemployment is still high.

"However, there should be more collaborative efforts between the state government, private sectors,

non-governmental organisations, trade associations and individuals," said Ahmed Razman.

As for Afzanizam, he thinks the state government should reevaluate some of its welfare programmes.

"It also makes sense to assess the recipients of financial aid this year and how they will fare next year.

He highlighted that the state's method of providing aid using income level as a gauge may be a problem as it may not represent a true picture of the recipient's financial situation.

"The point is, we have to be granular in assessing the recipients' background in order to avoid waste and leaks," he added.

#### A SUSTAINABLE BUDGET

As of Sept 30, 2021, Selangor has recorded RM1.79 billion in revenue collection or 81.48 per cent of its target of RM2.2 billion this year.

To date, approximately RM819.57 million or 67.18 per cent has been spent on management, while development expenditure amounts to 47 per cent or

**The state government should reevaluate some of its welfare programmes. We also have to be granular in assessing the recipients' background in order to avoid wastage and leaks**

Mohd Afzanizam  
Abdul Rashid,  
Chief Economist,  
Bank Islam Malaysia Bhd



# A magnum opus of devotion

By ALANG BENDAHARA

Tucked away in the remote town of Bukit Rotan in Ijok, Kuala Selangor, is an exquisitely crafted Hindu temple that is famous among worshippers and tourists all over the world. Built on an acre of elevated land, the Sri Shakti Temple rises majestically as a unique beacon of Hindu architectural excellence in Malaysia.

In conjunction with the celebration of Deepavali, Selangor Journal interviewed Sanathana Dharma Foundation & Sri Shakti Temple founding chairman Shivasri A P Muthukumara Shivachariyaar, a renowned national and regional spiritual leader, who told us about the divine intervention that helped to create the masterpiece of Hindu architecture.

The temple has a humble history when in the late 19th or early 20th century, Indian immigrants set up a small wooden shrine that housed a single oil lamp as their place of worship, said Muthukumara.

Years later, the temple went through a series of expansions and when authorities announced that a large tract of the temple's land had to be utilised for a road extension, the temple was moved to the present location.

"That was when I felt that if we have to move and build a new temple, we have to go big and go all the way, and build a magnificent building that will be testament to the Hindu faith," he said.

Using the knowledge and experience gained from his years of studying the Hindu religion in India, Muthukumara planned for only the best for the new temple.

"I have visited many temples in India, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam, and so I made comparisons between them all and decided that the followers of Hinduism here need to have a majestic temple of our own."

## Tribute to a goddess

In year 2000, plans for the new temple were drawn up under the guidance of Sirpa Aagama Kalaamani Sri Suppiah Stabathi, the resident temple architect of the Sri Kanchi Kamakoti Peedham in India. Leaving nothing to chance, all construction plans were taken to India to be blessed by various venerable and holy sages.

Finally, late in the year 2001, approval for the construction of the new temple was granted by the relevant authorities. Its construction started

in 2002.

This was when Muthukumara received repeated visions of the 51 'Shakti Peedam' during his prayer time and informed the committee about it.

A 'Shakti Peedam' is a holy centre dedicated to the goddess Shakti. According to Hindu mythology, Shakti, who was a consort to Lord Shiva,

immolated herself. Shiva picked up the remains of her body and performed an angry dance, cutting Shakti's corpse and jewellery into pieces which fell to the ground at 51 places all over the Indian sub-continent (44 in modern-day India, three in Nepal, and one each in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Tibet and Sri Lanka).

"So, everyone agreed to incorporate the Shakti statues into the temple's design, where today they adorn the temple's internal corridor," Muthukumara said.

He added: "This is the first temple in the world that organised a pilgrimage to all 51 'Shakti Peedams'. Two Hindu sages visited these holy sites and collected soil and chakra plates and brought them back to be installed. We are the only place in the world with sacred



earth from all 51 sites.

"Therefore visiting our Sri Shakti Temple in Bukit Rotan is comparable to visiting all the 'Shakti Peedams' located across the six countries and receiving their blessings."

Another unique feature of the temple is its use of a single colour throughout the facade of its building, a one-of-a-kind paint specially mixed using rose pink granite and marble dust.

"With a single colour, devotees and visitors can better admire the sculptures instead of being distracted by many colours," Muthukumara said.

## A Malaysian masterpiece

And so it came to be that after approximately 1.2 million man hours, 10 million bricks, 20,000 tonnes of steel bars, 1,500 cubic metres of concrete, 100 tonnes of granite and 25 tonnes of teakwood, this devoted labour of love finally came into fruition at a cost of RM12 million.

The funds for it came from the Federal and state governments, as well as business personalities and members of

the public.

On April 25, 2013, the temple's grand consecration was conducted by priests from Tamil Nadu, India, and Malaysia.

In true Malaysian manner, the temple's location is unique due to its close proximity to a church, a surau and a Chinese temple.

"As I have told everybody, despite our differences in religion we are all Malaysian, so we live in harmony with other races as we continue to practise our beliefs in peace," Muthukumara said.

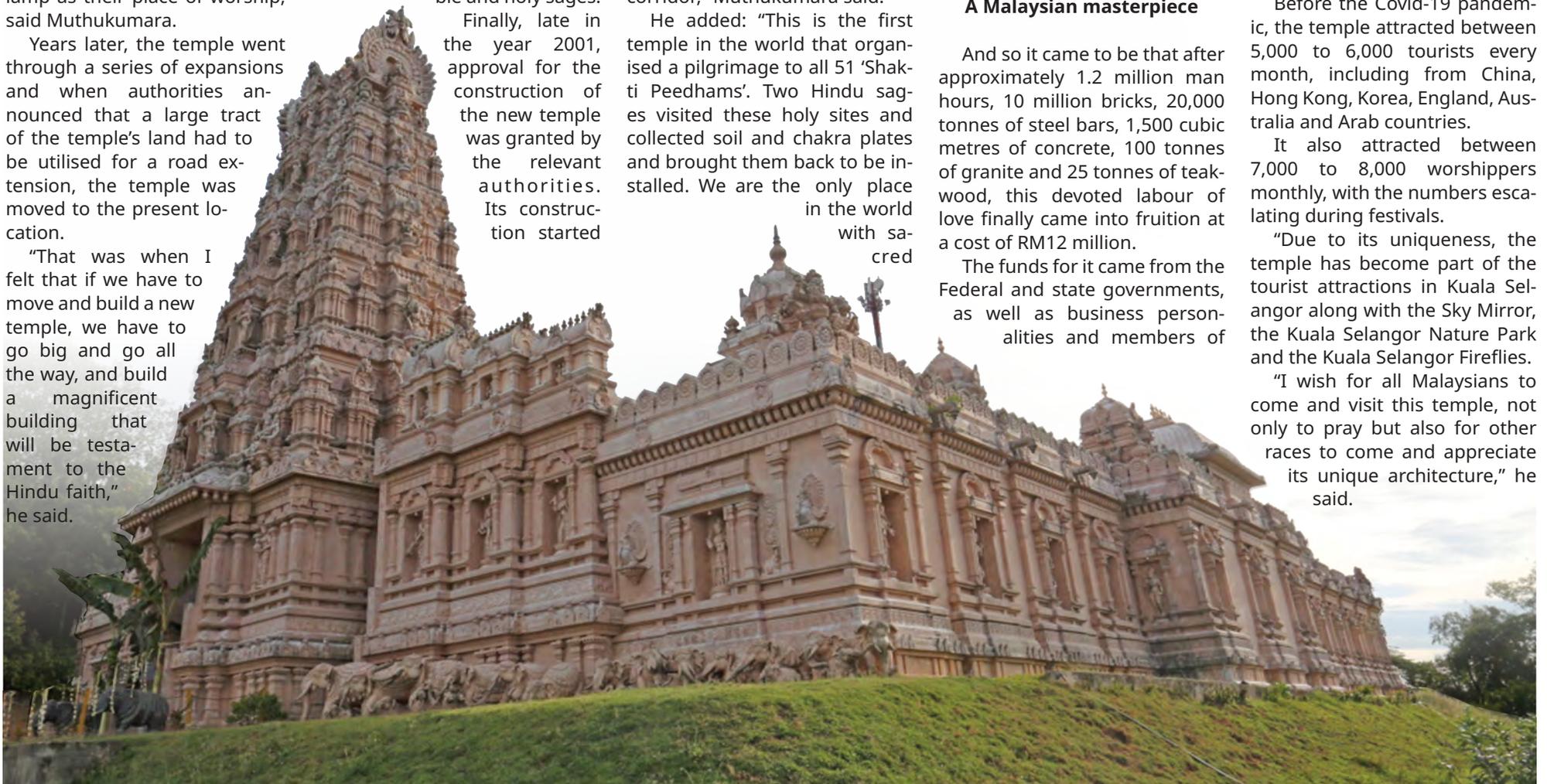
He added that it is this Malaysian spirit of tolerance that has made it possible to build a Hindu temple of such magnificence.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, the temple attracted between 5,000 to 6,000 tourists every month, including from China, Hong Kong, Korea, England, Australia and Arab countries.

It also attracted between 7,000 to 8,000 worshippers monthly, with the numbers escalating during festivals.

"Due to its uniqueness, the temple has become part of the tourist attractions in Kuala Selangor along with the Sky Mirror, the Kuala Selangor Nature Park and the Kuala Selangor Fireflies.

"I wish for all Malaysians to come and visit this temple, not only to pray but also for other races to come and appreciate its unique architecture," he said.



The soft launch of Sitham's Deepavali e-Bazaar 2020 was held at the Selangor State Secretariat Building on Nov 12 last year



A barber in Taman Sentosa receives a gift of hair-dressing tools from Sitham, handed over by Gunarajah



# Protecting the welfare of Selangor's Indians

By **NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI**

As the third largest ethnic group in Selangor, the Indian community has a crucial role to play in contributing to the social fabric of the state, along with the Malay and Chinese communities.

Undeniably, when it comes to matters close to the heart of Selangor Indians — be it religion or land ownership or the future of Tamil schools — much still needs to be addressed.

This is where Gunarajah George comes into the picture.

Gunarajah, who has been the state assemblyman for the Sentosa constituency since 2018, has been appointed by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari as a special officer responsible for elevating the status and quality of life of the community to which he belongs and knows so well.

He kicked off his political journey as a council member of the Selangor Municipal Council in 2009.

While he is grateful to the Menteri Besar for honouring him with the task, Gunarajah knows that it comes with great responsibility.

In an interview with *Selangor Journal* recently, Gunarajah said Amirudin personally believes that

the Indian community in Selangor needs a dedicated person who they can reach out to should there be problems relating to land disputes for the building of temples, Tamil school issues and other community-specific problems.

"Apart from helping the Indian community resolve issues, I am also responsible in assisting them to upgrade their socio-economic status. In Selangor, we have shown our solid commitment to help the community develop their own business by establishing the Selangor Indian Entrepreneur Development (Sitham) programme.

"Currently, Sitham has over 2,000 participants who are involved in four areas — entrepreneur development training, skills and manufacturing courses, business guidance, and business equipment assistance.

"As one of Sitham's committee members, I have always emphasised the importance of generating a second income even if the participants already have a stable job.

"We have to admit that one income is not sufficient to make ends meet, hence, I see that it is important to educate the people to generate another income. With the various advantages offered through the Sitham programme, we will help and train

the participants who have a strong will to succeed as entrepreneurs," he said.

Sitham was launched in September 2019, and focuses on Indian entrepreneurs who are committed to developing their own business, with the state government providing guidance, grants and the necessary equipment.

Apart from Sitham, another Selangor state initiative also serves to empower the community. Aptly named the Selangor Indian Empowerment and Entrepreneurs Development (i-Seed) programme, it aims to improve the economic status of Selangor Indians by providing equipment assistance for businesses.

"For instance, if the applicants want to start selling sugarcane juice, they can do up the paperwork to apply for any appliance or equipment needed to produce the juice. i-Seed is the brainchild of the Menteri Besar and is currently being administered by the state executive councillor for socio-economic development, V Ganabathirai," he said.

## Menteri Besar's guarantee

Commenting on the future of ethnic Indians in Selangor, Gunarajah said they do not have to worry as the Menteri Besar is resolved and committed to take care of the community's well being.

"If I am not mistaken, the

state government has provided an allocation amounting to RM1.5 million to be spent by the temple's committee should they need a bigger budget to run tuition classes, religious classes or childcare centres.

"As for concerns pertaining to other issues such as temple land disputes, abandoned housing projects involving estate workers as well as land ownership, suffice to say that the Menteri Besar and I are working closely to resolve them.

"The process might take some time due to technicalities and the complexity of each issue but rest assured that it has become part of the state government's vision to help the Indian community. My appointment itself shows that the Menteri Besar is serious in helping to protect the rights and improve the fate of the community."

Gunarajah also said that the state is not one to rest on its laurels, and that more programmes are in the pipeline that will not only prosper the Indian community but Selangor as a whole.

## A community's request

Gunarajah also said he wants to continue to be the go-between for the state government and the Indian community.

"At this point, I would like to convey a request from the Indi-

The state is not one to rest on its laurels. More programmes are in the pipeline that will not only prosper the Indian community but Selangor as a whole

## GUNARAJAH GEORGE

an community — they wish for more jobs and more business opportunities.

"Actually, the matter has been brought up in the state legislative assembly whereby we have requested that the Indian community be given business opportunities with the local government agencies.

"These include being provided the opportunity to run small businesses or kiosks at local councils' premises, and also the right training and funding. I believe this small action can lead to a significant impact for the community as a whole," he said.

As for the upcoming Deepavali celebration this year, Gunarajah said several plans had to be cancelled due to restrictions surrounding Covid-19.

"Nonetheless, we will celebrate the festival on a moderate scale and most importantly, the state government has allocated a budget for the distribution of Deepavali food packs across the state."

EVEN as the whole country came to a near standstill during the most challenging months of the pandemic, the furnace at Selangor Information Technology & Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec) never once stopped blazing. Tasked with leading Selangor towards its Smart State 2025 vision, the government agency has been tireless in inspiring new business talents to build their own tech companies. In this latest series on digitalisation, *Selangor Journal* speaks to its chief executive officer, Yong Kai Ping, about helping small traders get ahead.

By **ALANG BENDAHARA**

Working through a pandemic has been tough for Sidec. The numerous instalments of the movement control order (MCO) and the restrictions they imposed had made it nearly impossible for it to conduct any face-face classes or training. This hampered its goals.

"Previously (when existing) as Selangor Information Technology & E-Commerce Council (Sitec) we used to conduct our e-Commerce classes and Masterclasses face-to-face with our audiences. But since the start of the pandemic, all the classes have to be conducted virtually," said Yong.

He said their most affected programme was Jelajah Usahawan Digital Selangor (JUDS) which is an initiative to provide assistance to traditional brick and mortar micro-SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) who wish to venture into e-commerce.

JUDS is an outreach programme that converts the traditional e-commerce class to an on-site event.

"Last year, the programme was held in Bangi, Klang and Ampang and received an overwhelming response with more than 600 participants. A virtual series of the programme was held in December 2020.

"The programme was supposed to be held in each district in Selangor, but due to MCO restrictions, it could only be held in three districts as opposed to the original plan to have it in five districts in 2020," he said.

### Opportunities open up

Even though the odds are against them, Sidec continues to innovate in finding better ways to engage with its stakeholders during the restrictions.

"In adversity, there is al-

ways a silver lining. During the pandemic, the Selangor e-Bazar campaign came into being and it was held for four rounds. Through it we managed to get on board hundreds and thousands of merchants and garnered a gross merchandise value of close to RM3 billion.

"The four e-Bazar campaigns managed to benefit almost 300,000 online merchants and nurtured 75,000 new online merchants, generating direct sales of RM145 million, and creating a RM2.95 billion ripple effect to the economy of Selangor," said Yong.

The Selangor Raya e-Bazar and 11.11 e-Bazar were held in 2020 and the Chinese New Year e-Bazar, as well as another Raya e-Bazar, was conducted this year.

"The tremendous growth is a testament that e-Commerce and digitalisation are booming in Selangor," he said.

Apart from that, he added that Sidec has also rolled out the Selangor SME Digitalisation Matching Grant worth a total of RM5 million to help SMEs to digitalise their businesses.

"Seven months since its launch in April, we have helped 800 SMEs to not only digitalise their business but to also increase their sales and productivity and improve their efficiency. As of October, we have disbursed RM3.8 million via matching grants to SMEs."

The Selangor Accelerator Pro-

gramme (SAP) too, took off. In 2020 and 2021, 60 startups have been nurtured.

Yong said through talent-nurturing programmes such as the SAP, the startups get an avenue to hone their talents while also building an unrivalled network that empowers the economic growth of the state.

### Success stories

Yong also listed several stories of how their digitalisation programmes have helped entrepreneurs survive, and even prosper, during the crisis.

He said most sellers had shared information on how their sales had doubled and even tripled after joining the e-Bazar campaign.

Hajjah Zaharah Aris of modest clothing brand Az-Zara Boutique only managed to make sales of RM2,000 each month before the MCO. After joining the inaugural Selangor e-Bazar Raya campaign in 2020, her income increased to RM50,000.

Wan Shazerina Izlin Wan Mohd Zahid, whose company Marathon Baker produces homemade energy bars, saw a 50 per cent increase in sales compared to the month before participating in the Selangor e-Bazar 11.11 campaign.

Zarina Zahidan of Zarina Cakes initially recorded sales of between RM2,000 and RM3,000 when she first came on board

the Shopee e-Commerce platform. After participating in the CNY 2021 e-Bazar campaign and using vouchers disbursed by the state government, her sales reached RM13,000.

Haji Mohd Ghazali Anuar of Baiworld Kitchen is a trader of homemade snacks like bitter gourd chips and sambal. Managing to only sell 60 to 70 units a day, his sales more than doubled after joining this year's e-Bazar Raya campaign. He now makes a gross income of RM3,000 daily. He is also able to help smallholders in his area by buying their agricultural produce, opening up job opportunities for the less fortunate in the village.

Yong said all these success stories show how the adoption of digitalisation forced by the pandemic has tremendously helped their clients' businesses.

"Due to the pandemic, our stakeholders have been assisted to adopt digitalisation in their businesses as evidenced through the programmes that have been mentioned," he said.

### Raring to go

Even before the long list of restrictions were lifted, Sidec had already planned to restart their face-to-face engagements with the participating traders.

Yong said they will continue with most of their programmes such as the e-Commerce classes and SAP, as well as resume the

JUDS programme.

"Also, we are in the midst of coming out with concrete plans for the Selangor Digital School (SDS). The idea came about due to the shortage of digital talents and the abundance of uncertified online digital courses.

"With the SDS, short courses on relevant digital skills will be offered together with recognised certification at an affordable price," he said.

He said Sidec, which is under the purview of the Standing Committee of Trade and Investment of Selangor, as well as a subsidiary company of Invest Selangor Berhad, will continue with its mandate to lead the digital transformation of Selangor through four objectives:

**1** Nurturing Selangor's digital talents and narrowing the digital divide

**2** Accelerating Selangor startups to become regional tech icons

**3** Empowering Selangor businesses and SME digitalisation

**4** Encouraging digital investment and emerging technologies within Selangor.

Yong said Sidec focuses on three key sectors of the digital economy, namely e-commerce, startups and SME digitalisation.

"Sidec is committed to creating an innovative digital ecosystem that will inspire new talents to pursue their dreams fearlessly, to build significant regional technology companies with lightning-fast speed, that will propel Selangor to become the digital hub of Southeast Asia," he added.



By NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI

If you are a woman and have not had any experience with physical violence in your lifetime, consider yourself lucky, given the fact that one in three females in the world have been a victim of violence, mostly by their intimate partners.

Based on a 2021 research by the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Violence Against Women, an estimated 736 million women (almost one in three) have been subject to intimate partner violence, non-partner sexual violence, or both at least once in their life.

This equates to 30 per cent of women globally, aged 15 and older.

What is more worrying is the fact that the rates of depression, anxiety disorders, unplanned pregnancies and HIV are higher in women who have experienced violence compared to those who have not, as well as many other health problems that continue even after the violence has ended.

In conjunction with the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women on Nov 25, *Selangor Journal* reached out to Isabel Chung, the Research and Advocacy Officer of Women's Aid Organisation (WAO), to talk about domestic violence in the country.

According to Chung, a significant increase in domestic violence cases was recorded when the movement control order (MCO) was enforced in the country last year.

"A four-fold increase in hotline calls from April 2020 (MCO 1.0) was recorded compared to February 2020 (pre-MCO).

"These numbers have stagnated at an elevated level compared to pre-MCO.

In fact, Talian Kasih hotline had also seen a 57 per cent increase (or 1,893 calls) from women in distress up to March 26, 2020," she said.

From what the WAO has compiled, among the major factors which lead to the rise of domestic violence cases in Malaysia, especially during the MCO, include power and control, isolation and uncertainties to get help.

"During times of crisis, greater levels of unemployment and financial distress may aggravate an abuser's desire to exploit or maintain existing power imbalances in relationships as a means

# Recognising intimate partner abuse



to control a situation in an uncertain time.

"Apart from that, with almost no to very minimal contact with family, friends, and other support systems means there are fewer social avenues to seek help and support. Being confined with an abuser every day also makes accessing help — even in the form of calling helplines — more difficult because the abuser may be constantly monitoring domestic violence survivors," Chung added.

## Harmful narratives

In a recent study conducted by WAO involving 1,000 Malay-

sians, approximately 96 per cent of Malaysians recognise slapping, pushing and threatening behaviour as forms of domestic violence, while 84.4 per cent recognise controlling behaviour as a form of domestic violence.

However, Chung said the complexities of domestic violence are still not well-understood.

"For example, this same study found that 45 per cent of respondents believe that female victims who stay with their abusive partners are also responsible for the ongoing abuse.

"This indicates that while many Malaysians are able to recognise domestic violence, some Malaysians still believe that women are at least partly responsible for the abuse. This is simply not true as the responsibility of abuse falls solely on the perpetrator, and views such as this simply perpetuates the practice of victim-blaming and disregards the harrowing cycle of abuse that keeps survivors oppressed and perpetrators in positions of power," she said.

Chung stressed that it is important to always believe the survivors, whenever and however they choose to speak up.

"We have to understand and acknowledge that domestic violence is still highly stigmatised in

Malaysia — one that is still often perceived as a 'family matter' — and thus, speaking up about it is extremely difficult.

"When someone discloses violence to you, whether personally or on a public platform, we must believe them and offer support, such as by listening with empathy and care, offering a safe space both emotionally and physically, and/or accompanying a friend or family member to the hospital or police station.

"We have to be aware of harmful narratives about vio-

lence that emerge in everyday conversation — such as, that women are also at fault for staying in abusive relationships — speak against these myths, and avoid reinforcing these baseless ideas," she added.

## Knowledge is power

Meanwhile, Universiti Putra Malaysia senior counsellor Siti Fatimah Abdul Ghani said there are several reasons which make it hard for the victims to get away from the violence.

"Usually, the victims are advised to sweep things under the rug, they are told to settle the matter quietly as it would embarrass the family. All they should do is to pray and hope that things will get better in time and the abuser will soon realise their mistakes.

"As a professional counsellor, I would say, things rarely ever get better, simply because the abuser is never put in a position to learn a lesson. Sometimes, they do not even know that what they did was wrong. Subsequently, things will go from bad to worse, especially when the victim does not have enough courage to speak up," she said.

Recognising the struggles faced by the victim, Siti Fatimah shared some advice for those who are currently trapped in a relationship with an abuser.

The first step, she said, is to empower oneself with knowledge.

"Read a lot, get more knowledge, so that when you get abused, either mentally or physically, you know what is happening. The next thing to do is get help. Once you are aware that you need to get help, automatically you will know that what you're going through is unjust," she said.

Apart from that, the victim must also choose the right channel to report the violence to. For instance, if it is related to marriage, they can immediately file a report at any police station or the Department of Social Welfare (JKM) branches.

"They can also call the 24-hour Talian Kasih helpline at 15999 and most importantly, if they have sustained an injury from the violence, they must go to the hospital as soon as possible for proper treatment," Siti Fatimah added.



We have to understand that domestic violence is still highly stigmatised in Malaysia — one that is still often perceived as a 'family matter' — and thus, speaking up about it is extremely difficult. When someone discloses violence to you, we must believe them

**ISABEL CHUNG**  
WAO



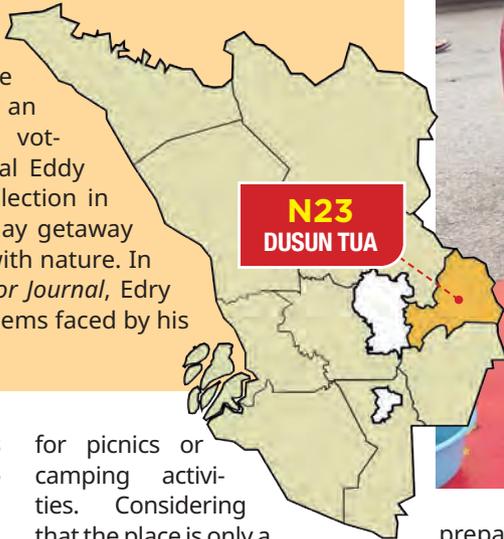
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**SITI FATIMAH**  
Senior Counsellor, UPM

# Building a future for Dusun Tua

By NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI

The old Malay village of Dusun Tua lies nestled in the sub-district of Hulu Langat. True to its name, fruit trees grow abundantly there and have been existing from as far back as when the place was first founded. As local legend goes, its early settlers had come across a Durian Tembaga tree in an old orchard there. Today, Dusun Tua is home to over 100,000 residents and an estimated 49,000 registered voters. Represented by Edry Faizal Eddy Yusof since the last General Election in 2018, the place is now a holiday getaway for city folk eager to rekindle with nature. In a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*, Edry Faizal shares some of the problems faced by his constituents.



**Selangor Journal (SJ):** What is the main industry in your constituency?

**Edry Faizal (EF):** Almost two thirds of the Dusun Tua constituency consist of rural land. The two main industries here are agriculture and tourism.

**SJ:** What is the main attraction in Dusun Tua?

**EF:** The Hulu Langat area has emerged as one of the most popular places in Selangor to experience nature due to its rich natural resources. There are many resorts, chalets and homestays for visitors to spend a day or two in a village environment. Dusun Tua is also home to two popular waterfall spots, namely Sungai Congkak and Sungai Gabai, and has many riverbank areas that are suitable

for picnics or camping activities. Considering that the place is only a stone's throw away from the city of Kuala Lumpur, it is no surprise that it has become a favourite location for picnics, camping, hiking and cycling.

**SJ:** What are the concerns raised by your constituents and how do you address them?

**EF:** Since the whole constituency is located along the upstream stretch of Sungai Langat, flooding is a problem especially during the rainy season. Our volunteer team, Gerak 23, is always on standby mode every time we enter the monsoon season. When there is a flood, our Food Bank N23 will be converted into an operations center where we

prepare meals for the people seeking shelter and coordinate our plans to help those affected.

A long-term solution has already been identified through the second phase of the Sungai Langat Flood Mitigation Plan. However, the project is still pending as the Federal government has yet to approve the budget.

Each time I attend the Selangor State Legislative Assembly, I will bring up the flood issue in the hope that I can secure enough funds to implement short-term solutions. Every year, the state government carries out many small-scale projects to reduce flooding, including deepening the river through dredging, building barriers along the river banks and so on.

**SJ:** What are your achievements so far in your constituency?

**EF:** The constituents do not only have problems relating to infrastructure. They are also constantly seeking to improve their livelihood and hope that the state government can take care of their welfare, especially during these challenging times where so many have suffered because of the pandemic.

As of now, we have three food banks that are operating on a daily basis. At these centres, we stock up on food items and other essentials that have been donated to us. Anyone can come. We also grow vegetables and rear fish in the compounds of our centres for the purpose

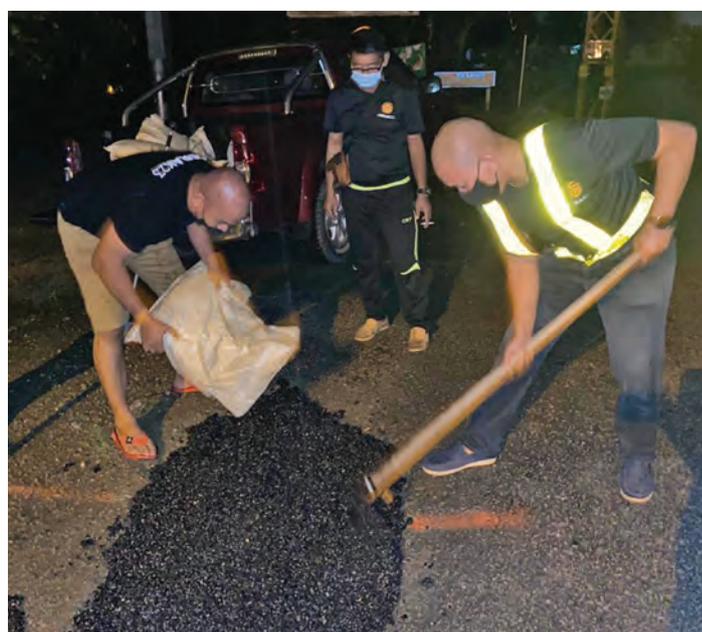
of distributing them to those in need.

We also have a programme called Wirausaha where we provide training and mentoring to local entrepreneurs. Currently, due to Covid-19, the focus of Wirausaha is to help our micro-entrepreneurs get their business online and point them to the schemes that the state government has provided for them.

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

**EF:** The very first step is to detect and verify the problem. I will do some research and look for the right people to help. I will also gather as much information as I can to come up with a possible solution. Usually, I'll work with my team and form a coalition to resolve any issues together.

For example, recently I have been receiving complaints about illegal dumping at a commercial area. With the help of the local councillor, we gathered all the parties that we believed were able to help, including representatives from the resident associations. However, this wasn't enough. We still could not find the culprit. And so we have decided to install closed-circuit television devices at strategic locations and appoint a task force to monitor the areas. With all our effort and teamwork, I believe the problem will be resolved quickly.



# Selangor to review Sukma medal target

By AMIN RIDZUAN ISHAK

**SHAH ALAM** - Selangor will review its 45 gold medal target in Sukan Malaysia (Sukma) 2020 which is expected to be held next year after being postponed twice due to Covid-19.

Selangor National Sports Council (MSN Selangor) executive director Mohamad Nizam Marjugi said this decision follows the latest developments of the athletes, with several of them choosing to withdraw from the competition to pursue their studies.

He added that the revised assessment will be based on

discussions with each team that has already resumed their training after the Federal government eased restrictions on sporting activities.

"Our athletes have been training under the sports bubble programme before flexibility was given under Phase Three of the National Recovery Plan.

"We want to make sure our athletes are able to give their best performance, despite not having a clear date for Sukma in



Johor yet," Nizam said when contacted by *SelangorKini*.

Initially, Sukma Johor 2020 was set to take place from July 11 to 19 last year, before being postponed to March 6 to 14 this year. However the event was postponed again, due

to the high number of Covid-19 cases.

Previously Selangor had aimed to achieve 45 gold medals, 40 silver medals and 40 bronze medals.



Zamani at the flag-off ceremony of MBSA's cycling programme on Oct 23 — Picture by AHMAD ZAKKI JILAN

## 80km bike lane for Shah Alam

**SHAH ALAM** - The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) is planning to develop an 80-kilometre cycling route for bicycle enthusiasts.

Shah Alam mayor Datuk Zamani Ahmad Mansor said the local council had already developed 30 km of the cycling route in 2013.

It starts from the Shah Alam city centre and progresses to Section 7.

He said the remaining 50 km will be developed in stages involving Sections 13, 18, 20 and 24, apart from continuing work on the existing route in Sections 2, 5 and 7.

"The initiative is aligned with the sustainable development goals under the health sector which aims to make Shah Alam a city for sports and recreation,"

he said after the flag-off ceremony of a cycling programme in conjunction with MBSA's Sports Day 2021 at the Kota Kemuning MBSA office in Shah Alam, recently.

Zamani said Shah Alam is a suitable venue for a sports city as it has many lakes and recreational areas, often attracting visitors from outside the city.

## MiniGP: Young Farres books ticket to Valencia



**KUALA LUMPUR** - Farres Putra of Selangor emerged as the overall champion in the inaugural FIM MiniGP Malaysia Series at the Sepang International Go-Kart Circuit on Oct 24, to earn a spot in the World Series to be held in Valencia, Spain in November.

Joining him in Valencia will be Emil Idzhar and Farish Hafiy, who finished second and third respectively at the grassroots-level talent development championship jointly organised by the Motorsports Association of Malaysia (MAM), the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) and ZK Racing Team.

According to a statement issued by the SIC, Farres garnered 135 points after four rounds in the series, finishing ahead of Emil (122 points) and Farish (120 points), with the final day's race being the most challenging for

the slick riders.

MAM secretary-general Muizz Azli, in congratulating the three riders, hoped that they would do their best at the World Series in Valencia from Nov 10-11.

"Today's Race One began on a wet track while Race Two was held on a dry track, so this is a very good experience for the riders, especially those three who will be competing in Valencia," he said, adding that the trio would leave for Valencia on Nov 6.

Recognised by Dorna, the rights holder of the MotoGP World Championship and the International Motorcycle Racing Federation (FIM), the riders compete using the Ohvale 160cc bikes, which is an Italian-made racing machine.

The MiniGP is contested by riders aged between 11 and 13. - Bernama

## Selangor gives back to its athletes

**KAJANG** - The state government has channeled an estimated RM195,450 in assistance to 50 former athletes and para athletes in Selangor via the Ceria Atlet Para Selangor 2021 programme.

State exco for sports Mohd Khairuddin Othman said those who represented the state and the nation at international meets also received furniture aid and repairs to their homes.

"The programme is now in its second year, and to date RM400,000 have been spent to help all athletes who have brought glory to the state and the nation.

"This year we continue our efforts in helping them, with the theme 'Remember the Athletes' Deeds'. God willing, assistance will be given in stages until this December," he said during the programme's launch at a para athlete's home in Sungai Seka-

mat on Oct 2.

Khairuddin said he hopes the programme will become a benchmark in bringing about greater concern for the welfare of para athletes and former athletes in Selangor.

"Their contributions and sacrifices in bringing glory to Selangor and Malaysia in the sporting arena will always be appreciated by the state government," he said.

Meanwhile the National Athlete's Welfare Foundation chairman Datuk Noorul Ariffin Abdul Majeed said Selangor is the first state to assist athletes, including para athletes.

"YB Mohd Khairuddin and the Selangor government have been very concerned, helping 50 athletes last year and another 50 this year. This is a great blessing, and may it continue in the future," he said.

# DIABETICS

## Protect Yourself Against Covid-19

### Follow basic protective measures

- ▶ Wash your hands frequently or use an alcohol-based hand rub
- ▶ Practice good respiratory hygiene
- ▶ Clean and disinfect objects and surfaces
- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth
- ▶ Keep a distance of at least 1 metre from others
- ▶ Seek medical help if you have a fever, a cough or difficulty in breathing
- ▶ Stay informed and follow medical advice

### Maintain a healthy lifestyle

- ▶ Eat a well-balanced diet
- ▶ Get active
- ▶ Avoid smoking, vaping, alcohol and drugs
- ▶ Take your regular medication
- ▶ Follow medical advice
- ▶ Stay in touch with your family and friends

### Plan ahead

- ▶ Make a plan so you know what to do if you start feeling ill
- ▶ Talk to your doctor about where and when you should get help if you get sick
- ▶ Keep up to two weeks of all your regular medicines, non-perishable food and other supplies
- ▶ Ask your social contacts to provide you with assistance, if needed
- ▶ Know in advance where and how to get practical help (e.g. calling a taxi or ambulance, or having food delivered)

**World Diabetes Day is marked on November 14 to promote awareness on diabetes mellitus and how the disease can be prevented or better managed. People with diabetes are at higher risk of having more severe complications from Covid-19 and dying from it.**

Source – NCDs and Covid-19: Protect yourself against Covid-19 symptoms, April 15, 2020, WHO

