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SELANGOR JOURNAL

WAKE-UP CALL

THE December 2021 floods that brought Selangor to its knees, in hindsight, should not have come as a total surprise. For too long, we had our minds fixed on Covid-19 and ignored the *other* global crisis, that of climate change. But the alarm has sounded, and as global citizens, we must rise to the call.

For things to happen there must be political will. A month after the floodwaters receded, the Selangor government formed a special committee on climate change that intends to make greener policies, plan ahead for future disasters and protect our vital food chain. If there is such a thing as a green vaccine, this would be it.

MORE ON PAGES 4, 5 & 11



Free health checks for the public



By SITI ROHAIZAH ZAINAL

PETALING JAYA - Selangor will be offering free health screenings across its 56 state constituencies starting March.

State executive councillor for public health Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud said the free checks will focus on non-communicable diseases (NCD) to encourage the early detection of illnesses.

Apart from that, the state's cancer screening programme, CanSEL, will also be conducted in the same month.

"There will be four types of screening that will be conducted at the community level. They are for the breast, cervix, colon and prostate. Samples will be taken for all cancer-related screening.

"If cancer or any other disease is detected, we will then take early measures. This is part of the state government's efforts in addressing public health issues," said Dr Siti Mariah when met at a free cervical

screening programme at the MBPJ Dewan Komuniti in Damansara Damai, here on Feb 13.

On Nov 26, 2021, Selangor Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari had announced a RM65 million allocation to improve public health under the 2022 Selangor Budget.

The allocation includes RM1.5 million to help 5,000 recipients receive medical checkups under Saring Selangor and RM1 million to fund mammograms and cervical, colorectal and prostate screenings,

The funds are inclusive of the RM5 million allocation to offer free heart treatment to eligible recipients and RM300,000 for the Slim Selangor programme to educate the public on healthy lifestyle choices.

Other initiatives include RM5 million to control dengue outbreaks, including exploring the use of drones to monitor outbreak zones and developing an app to map dengue hotspots.

Space out Ramadan bazaars to avoid crowding: Exco

KLANG - State executive councillor for local government Ng Sze Han has asked local authorities in Selangor to identify more locations where Ramadan bazaars can be set up to avoid having too many in one area that can cause visitor congestion.

He said spacing out the bazaars would make them easier for monitoring, to ensure both traders and visitors adhere to the Covid-19 standard operating procedures (SOP).

"The locations must be identified so that planning can take place to reduce the density of visitors.

"We require the assistance of the local authorities, as they have the information and knowledge on suitable locations for the bazaars. There could be an increase in the number of bazaars compared to

last year, which had 11,773 sites.

"The main thing is that we want to help traders and at the same time ensure that the SOPs are abided by. So far we have not been able to determine the number (of bazaars) as there are still applications being made," Ng said at the Klang Sejahtera: Towards Sustainable Development 2020/2021 appreciation ceremony held at Dewan Hamzah in the Klang Municipal Council headquarters on Feb 21.

On Feb 13, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob said no restrictions will be imposed on economic activities, including Ramadan bazaars, for the upcoming Hari Raya season.

However, he said the SOPs for bazaars will be refined and announced at a later date.

Confinement centres must get council approval

SHAH ALAM - The state government has decided that confinement centres in Selangor must be licenced under the healthcare centre category and controlled by the local authorities.

State executive councillor for local government and public transport Ng Sze Han said local authorities are responsible for ensuring that the activities carried out at the centres are organised and comply with regulations before a licence is issued.

"Through the licensing, the state government can ensure that all activities conducted at the confinement centres are safe and professional.

"The rules state that confinement centres are not allowed to operate in areas with noise, air and water pollution.

"Fundamentally, this licensing pro-

cess aims to ensure that such business activities can be controlled and are in compliance with the guidelines which have been set for the benefit of all parties.

"By taking this measure, the postpartum care for mothers and newborn babies in Selangor can be carried out safely," he said in a statement on Feb 14.

Ng added that the State Executive Council Meeting had approved a set of guidelines called 'The Establishment of Confinement and Treatment Centres for Mothers and Babies', which would be used as a reference point for all local councils in their process to approve business licences.

Local councils will also use the same set of guidelines in matters relating to law enforcement.

Johary Anuar sworn in as Subang Jaya mayor

SHAH ALAM - Dato' Johary Anuar was sworn in as Subang Jaya mayor at the Subang Jaya City Council (MBSJ) headquarters on Feb 8.

His appointment, which took effect on Feb 3, replaces former mayor Noraini Roslan who is now the Klang Municipal Council (MPK) president.

Johary holds a Master of Town Planning from the Berlin Technical University; a Bachelor of Operations Management degree from Universiti Te-

knologi Mara (UiTM); a Diploma in Business Studies from UiTM and a Diploma in Public Administration from the National Institute of Public Administration (Intan).

Prior to his appointment, Johary was the district officer at the Petaling Land and District Office from 2020.

He is the second individual appointed for the position of Subang Jaya mayor and has over 22 years of experience in the civil service.

The following are the highlights of Johary's career:

2000 — Served as the assistant director in Intan

2007 — Served in the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry as the principal assistant director of the Land Information Section under the Land and Mines Department

2009 — Served as the senior manager of the Human Resource Department in Lembaga Tabung Haji

2010 — Appointed as the principal assistant director of the Public Service Department

2012 — Served as the deputy director of the Selangor State Government Office

2015 — Served as the deputy mayor of the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ)

2020 — Served as the district officer at the Petaling Land and District Office

2022 — Appointed as the mayor of Subang Jaya

Floods may cost us RM1.4b: MB

By **NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI**

SHAH ALAM - The flood that hit Selangor in December last year resulted in an estimated loss of up to RM1.4 billion, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said the state government had allocated some RM400 million to repair damaged infrastructure.

"For private citizens, based on rough calculations on 100,000 families affected by the flood, we estimat-

ed that the minimum average loss for each family is RM10,000. Therefore, the total amount could reach up to RM1.4 billion.

"Previously, the Department of Statistics had issued a detailed report estimating losses at between RM3 billion and RM4 billion," he said at a special press conference on the latest updates relating to the floods at the Selangor State Secretariat building here on Feb 3.

Meanwhile, Amirudin said the state

administration has identified 10,554 affected homes for housing assistance.

"Of the total, 44 houses were destroyed in the floods and needed to be rebuilt. Some 10,510 other homes are undergoing restoration. State executive councillor for housing Rodziah Ismail, who is in charge of this matter, will update the details.

"We are also considering giving a one-off payment to homeowners to do minor repairs," he added.



Clean-up more expensive than expected

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government has utilised almost all of the RM20 million allocated for its post-flood cleaning operations in areas hit by the floods late last year, says Ng Sze Han.

The state executive councillor for local government, who has also been tasked to oversee the entire post-flood clean-up, said the total allocation was meant to cover both the first and second phases of the operation.

"The state has allocated RM20 million for Phase 1 and Phase 2, but we have yet to know the exact amount spent so far, perhaps close to RM20 million, which includes the figure paid to KDEB Waste Management Sdn Bhd (KDEBWM), local councils and Worldwide Holdings Berhad," he told *Selangor Journal* in an interview at the Selangor State Secretariat Building here, on Feb 11.

KDEBWM, a subsidiary compa-

ny of the state government that fully manages domestic waste collection, has undertaken the task to clear the flood-affected areas since Dec 20 last year in stages.

With the cooperation of the local authorities and other agencies, approximately 78,000 tonnes of bulk waste was cleared by Jan 7.

On Jan 8, the company started on the second phase of the clean-up operations, focusing on decontaminating clogged drains and ditches and the interiors of people's homes using microbial technology.

"Worldwide Holdings was paid as they had to set up a new dumping site in Jeram for the bulk waste collected.

"As for the cleaning process of clogged drains and ditches, it will continue even after the second phase of the clean-up operation is completed by the end of March," said Ng.

He said the state government has also planned to widen the drains and increase the height of river bunds as part of its plan to mitigate future floods.

On Dec 21, 2021, the Selangor government had allocated RM100 million in funds under the 'Ikhtiar Selangor Bangkit' initiative to kickstart the recovery process.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said out of the total, RM20 million would be spent on cleaning and restoration operations, while the remaining RM80 million would be used to rebuild damaged infrastructure.

The funds for cleaning and restoration operations are meant to cover the cost of cleaning up residential areas, restoring damaged infrastructure, providing health assistance, solid waste collection and managing temporary relief centres.

Selangor to review SMART tunnel proposal

SHAH ALAM - The recent suggestion by the Federal administration to construct a Stormwater Management and Road Tunnel (SMART) tunnel system in Selangor will be assessed by the state government, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said the state executive councillor for infrastructure, Izham Hashim, is currently compiling the information needed to ease the process.

"We are looking into various means. Aside from deep (underground) reservoirs, such as the technology used in Japan, and bank-side reservoirs, the (SMART) tunnel is one of them.

"These are some preventive measures, but the challenge is how to implement and execute them quickly and effectively," said Amirudin when met at Wisma Perbadanan Kemajuan Pertanian Selangor, here on Feb 5.

He said the state administration welcomes any ideas on the tunnel and how it would retain excess water.

"What happened with the floods (last December) was that the drainage systems could not retain the excess rainwater from the continuous downpour, followed by the high tide phenomenon," he added.

On Feb 4, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob had said that a SMART tunnel system might be constructed in Shah Alam as a long-term solution to mitigate floods in the area.

RM320,000 spent on MAEPS

SHAH ALAM - The state government had contributed various forms of assistance amounting to RM320,000 to ensure that the Covid-19 Integrated Quarantine and Treatment Centre 2.0 at the Malaysia Agriculture Exposition Park Serdang (PKRC MAEPS) was run smoothly.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the contributions were channelled when MAEPS was activated and thousands of Covid-19 patients were admitted to the centre.

"The contributions included donations of tablets to the frontliners, logistics assistance, food as well as child care centre management costs at MAEPS totalling RM320,000," he said on Feb 1.

On Feb 8, the centre was said to have officially closed. However, it was reported on Feb 25 that the centre was re-opened but on a smaller scale and catering to low-risk cases.

MAEPS was first activated as a PKRC on April 16, 2020, and in the 14 months of its operation, it had housed over 166,000 categories one to four Covid-19 patients.

Facebook, Instagram to promote newest geopark

SHAH ALAM - Tourism Selangor has chosen social media as the primary medium to promote beauty and uniqueness of the Gombak-Hulu Langat (GHL) Geopark to tourists, especially locals in the state.

Its chief executive officer Azrul Shah Mohamad (*pic*) said promotions made through social media are important to make people aware of the existence of the geopark as one of the eco-tourism spots in Selangor.

"We have intensified promotions on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, TikTok

and various other social media channels. We also plan to hold promotions on mainstream media such as electronic and print.

"We will highlight GHL Geopark during our tour programme, the Visit Selangor First (Pusing Selangor Dulu) campaign," he said during the Bual Bicara talk show titled 'GHL Geopark: Towards becoming a National Geopark' that was broadcast live on *SelangorTV's* Youtube and Media Selangor's Facebook on Feb 11.

Azrul Shah also acknowledged that promotion is a vital aspect of tourism and had successfully introduced some of the geoparks in the country to visitors.

"Langkawi Geopark is very popular among locals due to the promotional programmes carried out.

"GHL Geopark has more advantage because Selangor has a

population of over six million and they are the target of our promotions," he said.

Meanwhile, another panellist, PLANMalaysia@Selangor director Md Nazri Abdullah, agreed with Azrul that promotion is the key element in highlighting GHL Geopark.

"We held a logo design contest as part of our effort to introduce GHL Geopark and we already have a winner. The logo will be launched this March, followed by promotional programmes.

"Promotion is important because GHL Geopark is unique as it is the only geopark located in the suburbs with a high population density. This advantage will help in popularising it," he said.

Other geosites in the state include the Gombak Selangor Quartz Ridge, Kundang Blue Lake, the Batu Caves limestone caves, Bukit Tabur, the former coal-mining town of Batu Arang, Mount Nuang and the Sungai Kanching waterfall.

On Nov 9 last year, state executive councillor for tourism and environment Hee Loy Sian said Selangor had formed a Geopark Management Body in Gombak and Hulu Langat in its efforts to obtain the National Geopark recognition.

He said the committee would collect information on 20 sites in the state, provide data, execute promotional activities, and identify agencies to collaborate with.



KDEB Waste Management workers load rubbish onto their truck in Pandan Jaya

Getting ahead in recycling

By **ZAREEF MUZAMMIL**

SHAH ALAM - KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM) will build another five Material Recovery Facilities (MRF) this year as part of its efforts to increase the recycling rate in Selangor.

Its managing director, Ramli Mohd Tahir, said the new facilities would be located in Sepang, Selayang, Ampang, Petaling Jaya and Hulu Selangor, thus bringing up the number of MRF it operates in the state to seven.

"We have discussed this with the local councils and they have agreed to provide the place for us to establish these facilities.

"We will monitor the progress and we believe these facilities should be increased to speed up the recycling rate in Selangor to make it a clean state," he told *SelangorKini* on Feb 11.

Ramli said each MRF could separate up to

20 tonnes of recyclable waste a day, including plastic, paper, aluminium and metal.

"This means we should be able to recycle 100 tonnes of recyclable waste that would otherwise be disposed of at the Jeram Sanitary Landfill.

"Apart from that, the MRFs are also able to process recycled materials into new products.

"We are collaborating with three companies that have the expertise to transform plastic waste into biodiesel," he said.

During the tabling of the 2022 Selangor Budget on Dec 26 last year, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the MRF initiative would be expanded to each district in the state to help reduce recyclable waste.

Amirudin also informed that KDEBWM has set up an MRF in Meru, Klang and another in Bukit Puchong, Subang Jaya.

Green projects awarded grants

SHAH ALAM - A total of 128 organisations and associations have been selected to participate in the Selangor Green Technology and Environmental Grants 2021/2022.

State executive councillor for environment and green technology Hee Loy Sian said the selected participants would implement an impactful environmental sustainability programme.

"Some 320 applications have been received since registration opened on Dec 1 last year. Of this, 128 applications were approved, while some had to be rejected as they did not focus on green technology and the environment.

"The selected applications include programmes related to environmental sustainability, such as river and beach cleaning, environmental education seminars and tree planting," he said when met during the Green Technolo-

gy and Environmental Grants 2021/2022 hand-over ceremony at the Selangor State Secretariat building on Feb 14.

Hee said that the grant is an initiative to support Selangor's agenda in preserving the environment and tackling global warming and air and water pollution issues.

"The objective is to help the community in getting funding for their innovative projects so that awareness on the importance of environmental care is increased, as well as encouraging the use of green technology in daily life," he said.

For this year, the state government had allocated some RM1.3 million in grants, with maximum funding of RM10,000 under the Environment Grant for each organisation and association as well as RM20,000 for the Green Technology Grant.

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State readies for forest fires

By SITI ROHAIZAH ZAINAL

SHAH ALAM - The state government has drafted a new standard operating procedure (SOP) to address the issue of forest fires, especially in the Revolusi Hijau area in Johan Setia, Klang, and the Kuala Langat Selatan Forest Reserve (KLSFR).

State executive councillor for environment Hee Loy Sian said the proposed SOP would be discussed with the Department of Environment (DOE) on March 1 in preparation for the upcoming hot spell.

"We are expected to face hot weather in March, April, July and August. Therefore, the meeting is to address issues that will arise later.

"Preparations need to be made and we will ensure that tube wells can supply water to put out fires in the event it breaks out in certain localities," he said.

Hee said so far they have received reports of fires in the Revolusi Hijau area, Klang, but that the incidents were not serious.

On Aug 13 last year, through the DOE, the state government activated the National Open Burning Action Plan (PTPTK) following the said fires in Johan Setia.

Hee informed that the SOP for peat fire prevention includes monitoring and extinguishing fires, and enforcement measures were also introduced to tackle open burning.

The DOE had declared that open burning is prohibited in Selangor, Pahang and Johor effective from March 3, 2021, until a date determined later under Section 29AA (2) of the Environmental Quality (Amendment) Act 20011.

Meanwhile, the state administration is working towards getting 33.3 per cent of its forest land gazetted by 2030.

Hee said that currently, the forest reserves in Selangor encompass approximately 32.5 per cent of the state's land.

"Selangor is committed to ensuring that the total area of forest reserves does not decrease, but instead, increases.

"We are revisiting potential forests that can be protected, and we are confident in making this happen. However, the process is not easy and it takes time for forests to be gazetted as reserves," he said on Feb 14.

Selangor had recently added three more forests, totalling 581.48 hectares, to its reserves list to preserve



natural habitats, protect its natural water sources and control humidity.

The Sungai Panjang forest reserve in Sabak Bernam, the Ampang Pechah forest reserve in Hulu Selangor, and the Bukit Broga forest reserve in Hulu Langat also contain a variety of flora

and fauna species.

Also remaining under protected status is the Kuala Langat North Forest Reserve that spans 900 hectares, even though studies have found that 30 to 40 per cent of its diversity has declined due to peat swamp forest fires.



Aerial view of a truck loading bulk waste to be disposed of following the floods in December last year, in Shah Alam — Picture by BERNAMA

Councils to use space agency's findings

KLANG - The Selangor government will work with the Malaysian Space Agency (MYSA) to obtain the latest satellite observation data to detect areas that have the potential to become illegal dumpsites.

State Local Government, Public Transport and New Village Development Committee chairman Ng Sze Han said the agency, in a meeting last week, informed the state government that there are about 1,400 such areas so far.

"The data from MYSA will be distributed to all local authorities in Selangor to monitor and verify, as such sites may not nec-

essarily become actual dumping grounds. The satellite can only see from above; we need to do monitoring for verification.

"If any of these locations indeed become dumping sites, we will immediately take enforcement action," he told reporters after attending the Klang Sejahtera: Towards Sustainable Development 2020/2021 appreciation ceremony here on Feb 21.

According to Ng, illegal waste in Selangor mostly comes from the construction sector. Factories and commercial businesses also play a part in dumping waste. - Bernama

Education key to going plastic free, says exco

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government is taking a proactive step to expand its plastic bag-free campaign this year.

State executive councillor for environment and green technology Hee Loy Sian said the campaign would involve NGOs and the media to educate society, so that plastic bag usage can be reduced.

"We also encourage local authorities to conduct awareness campaigns on plastic bag usage," he said during the Selangor Environmental and Green Technology Small Grant 2021/2022 presentation ceremony, held at the foyer of the State Secretariat Building on Feb 14.

Approximately RM6.4 million was collected by the state government in plastic bag charges last year, compared to RM6.6 million the year before.

"The collected amount is indic-

ative of a reduction in plastic bag usage, and is a good sign.

"For the time being, the 20 sen charge per plastic bag is sufficient, and we should not burden users.

The collected funds will be used to educate society by organising campaigns," he said.

On Sept 27 last year, the councillor announced that the 20 sen charge may be increased should the plastic-free campaign, which has been running for several years, fail to achieve its objective.

Hee added that the amount of money collected from the charge will be reviewed every year before any policy changes are made.

From January 2017, businesses in Selangor were no longer allowed to provide plastic bags for free while food traders have been ordered to use disposable containers.





Next air show will be better, says exco

By ZAREEF MUZAMMIL

PETALING JAYA - The second edition of the Selangor Aviation Show (SAS) 2022, slated to be held from Sept 8 to 10 this year, is expected to provide more thrills.

State executive councillor for trade and investment Dato' Teng Chang Khim said more programmes are in the pipeline, including aerial displays, to attract more visitors and industry players.

"We already have the experience from last year so this time, we will double up on our efforts to make SAS an event that can pique the public's interest.

"Most likely we will hold an aerial demonstration and not just static displays," he told the media after the Business Aviation & General Aviation Townhall session in Petaling Jaya on Jan 27.

Teng said he also expects more participation from Spain, China, the United Kingdom, Japan and Korea.

The 2022 Selangor Budget tabled by Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari has allocated RM5 million for SAS 2022.

Its 2021 edition, which ran from Nov 25 to 27, saw the participation of 43 exhibitors from local and international companies.

The total number of static aircraft displayed was 18, with the most prominent being the E195-E2 regional commercial jet from Embraer, the T265 GOKBEY from Turkish Aerospace, the Piaggio P-180 Avanti EVO from Piaggio Aerospace, and Airbus Helicopter AS350 Ecureuil, among others.

Thirteen memorandums of understanding on various aerospace industry subsector collaborations were also signed at the event.

Councils profit from good governance

KUALA LANGAT - The revenue collection of the Kuala Langat Municipal Council (MPKL) increased to RM81.4 million in 2021 compared to RM79.8 million in the previous year.

Its president, Dato' Amirul Azizan Abd Rahim (*pic*), said the achievement is the result of good governance practices, better responsibility and strong discipline.

"MPKL practises good governance that is realistic, based on our estimated expenditure. Keeping a balanced budget is our formula in maintaining our record of achieving the Clean Audit Certificate for 13 consecutive years.

"MPKL is confident that this excellent performance will continue in 2022 and the coming years," he said during the Excellent Service Awards (APC) and Appreciation Awards ceremony at Universiti Mahsa on Feb 16.

A total of 35 MPKL staff from various departments received the APC 2021.

Meanwhile, the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) on Jan 24 announced that it had recorded strong financial performance last year with a surplus of RM21.233 million.

Its mayor, Mohamad Azham Md Arif, said the achievement is based on a comparison with the deficit budget proposal of RM18.054 million after total revenue collection (RM355.941 million) minus total operating expenditure (RM268.073 million) and development expenditure (RM66.634 million).

"MBPJ's financial position and performance remain strong and stable as well as resilient against the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Based on our ongoing efforts, the positive trend is likely to continue this year," he said after chairing the MBPJ Full Board Meeting Vol. 1/2022 at the MBPJ headquarters.

Mohamad Azham added that MBPJ will continue to increase its revenue collection by facilitating online payments and by setting up mobile counters outside its headquarters.



Franchising can benefit B40, M40 groups

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government is encouraging more people in the Bottom 40 per cent (B40) and Middle 40 per cent (M40) household income group to venture into the franchise business.

Selangor Housing, Urban Wellbeing and Entrepreneur Development Committee chairman Rodziah Ismail (*pic*) said the state government views the franchise business as one that has potential in contributing positively to the economy, post-Covid 19.

"The franchise system is one of the systematic methods for product distribution and services. With efficient management, productivity can be enhanced through knowledge and tech-

nology transfer to meet the requirements and needs of consumers," she said in her speech at the launch of the state-level Micro and Affordable Franchise Roadshow Programme (F3M Roadshow) on Feb 5.

The fourth series of the roadshow is a programme organised by the Malaysian Franchise Association (MFA) together with the Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs this year, the MFA said in a statement on Feb 5.

Rodziah believes it can produce more franchise entrepreneurs in Selangor,

especially with the availability of grants offered under the F3M Programme, besides aid provided by the Selangor government through the Hijrah Selangor scheme, Selangor Micro-Entrepreneurs Fund Grant (DUMS) and the initiative to offer retail space by the local authorities in the state.

The Ministry provides two types of grants for the development of micro and affordable franchises, through an allocation of RM6 million.

The focus of offering the two grants

is to increase the number of franchise entrepreneurs from the B40 and M40 group through matching grants and full grants to help entrepreneurs develop more franchise packages worth RM100,000 and below RM50,000.

MFA chairman Datuk Dr Radzali Hassan said the association is always prepared and committed to helping entrepreneurs and the public who need support and advisory services to venture into the franchise business.

For more information on the franchise business, the public can contact MFA at 03-6241 4141 or visit the association's website at www.mfa.org.my. - Bernama



MBI inks deal on e-wallet

SHAH ALAM - Menteri Besar Selangor (Incorporated) or MBI has signed an investment agreement for the development of an e-wallet.

The agreement is in partnership with Wavpay Systems Sdn Bhd, which was represented by its Group founder Tan Chun Aik.

The state government was represented by executive councillor for trade and industry Dato' Teng Chang Khim, who is also the Selangor E-Wallet Sdn Bhd chairman.

Teng said the partnership will lead to the creation of an app that can connect all social and financial services belonging to Selangor.

If things run smoothly, it will be launched within three months with an announcement on the e-wallet's name.

"This is in line with the wishes of Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari to develop a cashless community in Selangor," said Teng during a press conference following the signing of the agreement on Feb 14.

"The programme will be formed between the state government and existing e-wallet companies, complete with money lending licensing from Bank Negara Malaysia, and the Housing and Local Government Ministry," he added.

Also in attendance was MBI chief



Teng (second from left) and Tan during the agreement signing ceremony to develop the state's first e-wallet, at the MBI headquarters in Shah Alam on Feb 14

executive officer Norita Mohd Sidek.

Teng said with the e-wallet, local councils can use it to collect tax payments and parking fines.

Recipients of monetary aid from the state government will also get their payments via the app. This cash-

less method will expedite the whole distribution process, Teng added.

The initiative will also boost service efficiency between the government and small and medium businesses that rely on government loans.

During the 2022 Selangor Budget

tabled in November last year, Amirudin said Selangor will launch an e-wallet service to bring about a cashless community.

He added that Selangor e-Wallet Sdn Bhd was formed to create ties with existing e-wallet companies.

i-City a role model for growth

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor government is determined to be a hub for potential investors eager to grow their investment ambitions in the country while seeking stable ground in the Asean region, says Dato' Teng Chang Khim.

In a report by the *New Straits Times* (NST) on Feb 17, the state executive councillor for industry and trade said that the growth of the aerospace and biotech industries is a key priority for Selangor's state government.

"We are always eager to work with the industry and visionaries like Tan Sri Lim Kim Hong (I-Berhad group chairman), who helped shape i-City into what it is today. We are researching smart city technology. We hope to work with i-City to build a smart city in Selangor. This is part of our smart Selangor strategy to make the state a regional smart state," Teng was quoted by NST, citing the i-City smart city project in Selangor.

Teng said the state administration has set aside a significant budget to develop Selangor into a regional smart state.

"We will be working on green tech-

nology development. We believe we can play a significant role in the development of green technology in Malaysia, and we look forward to collaborating closely with i-City. With i-City's development and commitment over the years, we believe we can have a fruitful collaboration," said Teng.

Teng also stated that Selangor has developed a managed industrial park idea to attract new investment to the state.

"In developing our rules and policies, we took into consideration the management and development of i-City. We plan to develop our managed industrial park using i-City as a model, and we believe it will be a success and will attract investors."

He also expressed his satisfaction with i-City's progress since its inception in 2005 and said that the project would establish Selangor as a significant digital hub.

i-City plans to spend RM10 million on its digital transformation plan to add a Metaverse experience to its theme park, which will see the i-City's City of Digital Lights combined with an immersive 3D Metaverse experience as part of the theme park's renovation project.

Stage set for doing business

By **ZAREEF MUZAMMIL**

PETALING JAYA - The Selangor government will continue to play an active role in providing the best business and investment environment.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the effort is to support the state's economic recovery after a challenging period following the Covid-19 pandemic and the recent floods.

"According to the World Bank Group in 2020, Malaysia is ranked 12th in the Ease of Doing Business Index. So, I believe Selangor can offer the best and most conducive environment for businesses to operate in the state.

"I am also confident that with the current efforts, Selangor will continue to be a stable and prosperous destination for everyone as well as battle-ready to deal with any economic crisis in the future."

Amirudin was speaking at the state-level Chinese New Year dinner on Feb 8.

Also present were state executive councillor for investment Dato' Teng Chang Khim and Invest Selangor Berhad chief executive officer Dato' Hasan Azhari Idris.

Meanwhile, Amirudin said a total of 182 investment projects were approved by the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (Mida) in Selangor during the first nine months of 2021, which is the highest in the country.

The projects provided 12,226 job opportunities, the most compared to other states.

"With these continuous business activities and inflows of investment, Selangor will definitely continue to attract skilled and semi-skilled professionals to make the state their home.

"Selangor is also able to offer various languages and ethnicities, which is one of the state's main competitive advantages in human capital, especially to new foreign investors and multinational companies," he said.



By ALANG BENDAHARA

WATER woes, the infamous words often used to describe Selangor seem more distant now compared to before, thanks to the state's short-term initiative, the Raw Water Security Scheme (SJAM).

The scheme was mentioned during the tabling of the 2021 Selangor Budget in October 2020, when Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari outlined several measures to resolve water supply disruption issues.

Following that, in December 2020, the state administration came up with four steps under the SJAM to ensure that the people of Selangor would receive continuous water supply.

The four steps that were outlined are to introduce a pre-treatment process to improve the quality of river water; to survey and monitor water sources for early detection of pollution; to construct direct pumping infrastructure as a long-term plan to divert any polluted water; and stricter laws for offenders via the Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas) (Amendment) Enactment 2020.

In conjunction with World Water Day on March 22, *Selangor Journal* interviewed the state executive councillor for infrastructure Ir Izhah Hashim to learn more about the SJAM.

What is it?

Izhah said SJAM had focused on protecting the production process at several water treatment plants (WTPs) located along two rivers — Sungai Selangor and Sungai Semenyih — after several river contamination incidents led to the temporary closure of the plants and left millions of consumers in the Klang Valley with dry taps.

"There are a lot of industries located along these two rivers, and some may intentionally or unintentionally contribute to polluting them.

"The state opined that to move these industries to another location would involve legal, economic, social and political costs," he said.

Therefore, a quick and viable solution was to develop infrastructures that could help prevent the shutdown of WTPs due to river water pollution and severe drought. So far, the state has spent nearly RM300 million on SJAM initiatives.

New laws

On Nov 9, 2020, the amendments to the Luas Enactment 1999 were passed at the Selangor State Legislative Assembly with 11 amendments, including increasing the minimum penalty to RM200,000 and setting the maximum fine to not more than RM1 million. Also introduced was a mandatory jail term to serve as a deterrent to future polluters.

The amendments also require the polluters to pay Luas all cleanup-related costs.

The Luas Enactment 1999, which was gazetted on May 20, 1999, had never been amended since it was enforced over 20 years ago.

Izhah said Section 104 of the Enactment also provides rewards and protection to whistle-blowers to encourage the public to give information on river pollution activities.

"Luas would continue to open investigation papers to collect evidence to prosecute pollution offenders in the Court of Law," he said.

Healing rivers

Izhah said a one-year pilot bio-remediation project was executed on Sungai Gong in Rawang that flows through industrial areas into Sungai Selangor, where the WTPs are located.

The project that ended late last year was conducted by Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) with cooperation from Nuaim Corporation (M) Sdn Bhd at the cost of RM2.497 million through a contra deal on the sale of river sand.

The Raw Water Treatment System (RWTS) process uses a combination of biological approaches via 'Aqurintin' nanotechnology, which multiplies diatom algae to naturally clean and purify water at its source. This method also increases oxygen content, removes smell, destroys oil and grease, reduces heavy metals, and rejuvenates aquatic life.

"As a result of this project, the water quality in Sungai Gong has improved from Class 3 to Class 2. Thus we are considering expanding this treatment to Sungai Sembah and Sungai Semenyih," he said.

Special squad

Among the most visible initiatives taken under SJAM are the establishment of a 24-hour river monitoring and surveillance

Safeguarding our life source



As a result of this project, the water quality in Sungai Gong has improved from Class 3 to Class 2. Thus we are considering expanding this treatment to Sungai Sembah and Sungai Semenyih."

Izhah Hashim

at the Horas 600 ponds in Kampong Sungai Darah, Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor as well as the water intake of the Rantau Panjang WTP in Kuala Selangor.

"The process includes constructing river diversion at the water intakes of Sungai Selangor Phase 1, 2 and 3 WTPs in Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor, and the Sungai Semenyih WTP in Jenderam Hilir," he said.

Positive outcome

As Malaysia's largest water service provider, Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Air Selangor) is responsible for abstracting, treating, and distributing clean and safe water to over 8.4 million consumers in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya.

"We welcome this new initiative from the Selangor government to create better synergy in mitigating any unscheduled water disruption due to water pollution in the future," said a company spokesperson.

It said SJAM acts as a preventive measure to mitigate river pollution incidents before effluents get to the intake points. This has helped Air Selangor regain control of the situation.

"We can see that recently, water pollution cases have been managed well and they lessened the impact on our operations and the need to shut down our WTPs," said the agency.

Photos from top left

Nuaim Corporation (M) Sdn Bhd workers prepare a biocompound to treat Sungai Gong's water in Rawang on Feb 23

The biocompound mixture is applied directly into the river

A Skuad Pantas officer takes a sniff of Sungai Gong's water to assess its quality

A sample of river water is tested for effluents and other forms of pollution

Luas officers conduct regular checks on all the hardware at the Horas 600 project in Bestari Jaya, Kuala Selangor

The site of the Horas 600, a project integral to Selangor's promise to supply clean water to the Klang Valley

Luas and Air Selangor workers monitor water levels at the Horas 600 pond from the control room



team under Luas known as Skuad Pantas at the river basin areas of Sungai Selangor, Sungai Semenyih and Sungai Langat.

Izhah said the team uses high-tech drones to monitor river basin areas, analyse water samples, and collect evidence for prosecution in court. It also uses an early odour pollution detection system or sensors using an organic carbon analyser device or the Total Organic Carbon (TOC) Analyser, to help detect early signs of pollution.

He said there are two primary uses of the unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), first for scheduled monitoring in high-risk areas at river reserve and industrial areas, which is done every three months, and second, for when pollution is detected to assess the potential risk from the effluents in the

water, especially in remote areas or during night time.

"Also, in less than four hours after receiving any reports, the squad can conduct an investigation, secure the areas and take mitigation action in any polluted sites," he said, adding that since the squad was set up, river pollution could be averted early before it reaches the WTPs.

The squad also conducts in-situ checks on water quality on rivers using the main parameters such as pH level, dissolved oxygen (DO), biochemical oxygen demand (BOD), chemical oxygen demand (COD) and ammoniacal nitrogen (AN).

Dilute and divert

In the event of pollution, raw water

from two ponds will be pumped into Sungai Selangor and Sungai Semenyih for the process of dilution and flushing of pollutants at the WTPs' intake point.

The Hybrid Off-River Augmentation System (Horas) 600 flows into Sungai Selangor while Pond C flows into Sungai Semenyih. Both would eventually supply water to the WTPs located at their respective rivers.

Izhah said the appointment of a contractor for the raw water channelling project is currently underway, which would involve four work packages. He said the project is also expected to be completed by the end of 2022.

"The packages include supply, installation, testing and commissioning of the Archimedean screw pump system and

THE RAW WATER SECURITY SCHEME (SJAM) outlines a list of steps to be taken as an overall solution when river pollution occurs, whether upstream or downstream.

The four steps are:

1 To make amendments to the Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas) Enactment 1999, as below:

1.1 Conducting a law review on Luas Enactment 1999 and Emission or Discharge of Pollutants (State of Selangor) Regulations 2012

1.2 Reviewing the amount of fines and compounds so that it will strike fear into offenders

1.3 Discharging effluents based on river capacity by applying the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) in designated areas in line with Section 56 of the Luas Enactment 1999 and implementation of the Polluters Pay Principle (PPP)

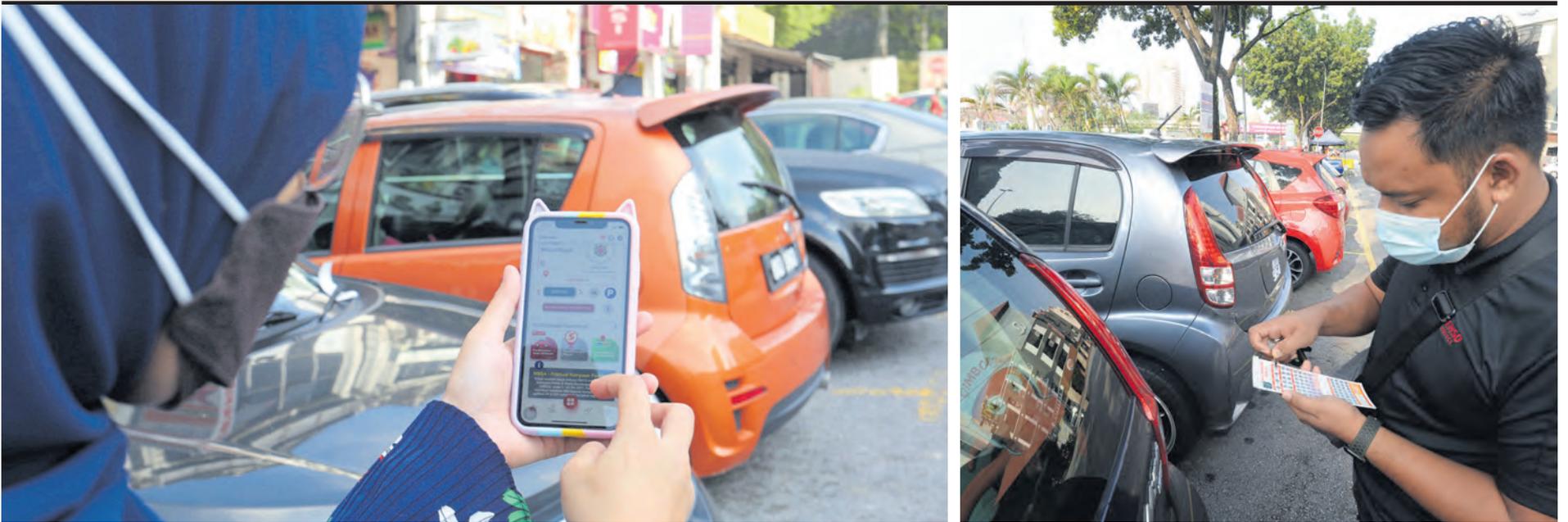
1.4 Implementing a feasibility study on zero discharge and recycling practices on effluents for the future, in line with Section 127(m) of the Luas Enactment 1999

(The amendments were passed in the Selangor State Legislative Assembly on November 2020)

2 To conduct monitoring and surveillance by Luas through its Skuad Pantas

3 To implement a pilot project on biological treatment or bio-remediation for the restoration of water quality in Sungai Gong

4 To construct raw water pumping infrastructure at the Hybrid Off-River Augmentation System (Horas) 600 to channel water into Sungai Selangor, and at Pond C into Sungai Semenyih.



Cashless parking catches on

By **ALANG BENDAHARA**

IN slightly more than a month, Selangor will fully achieve its digital parking system dream as scratch-and-display coupons will no longer be accepted in the Golden State. The Smart Selangor Parking (SSP) app, which makes it all happen, will bring Selangor closer towards its aspiration to become Southeast Asia's premier smart state by 2025.

The man behind the move, Local Government, Public Transportation and New Village Development Committee chairman Ng Sze Han, had steadfastly nurtured Selangor's pre-pandemic digitalisation ambitions and pushed the state's agenda forward when Covid-19 made it almost impossible for in-person interactions to take place.

In an interview with *Selangor Journal*, Ng said the SSP app continues to record achievements that cement its position as the premier parking app in the country.

"From the time it was launched (on July 1, 2018) until Feb 10, 2022, the number of users registered with the digital parking payment system has been increasing, reaching 1.89 million at present.

"Parking payments made through SSP have helped to save approximately 981,159 kg of paper," he said, adding that based on its sheer number of users, SSP still maintains its position as the most popular parking app in Malaysia.

Comparatively, the councillor had told the media on March 19 last year that 1.5 million users were registered with SSP, and the app had saved 634,994 kg of paper.

The SSP app is now used by 10 local councils covering Shah Alam, Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Klang, Kuala Langat, Ampang Jaya, Kajang, Sepang, Kuala

Selangor and Selayang.

"However, it does not cover Sabak Bernam and Hulu Selangor as parking in these two areas is still free," he said.

Easy to use

On Jan 3, the state government abolished on-street parking fees using coin machines or the manual coupon system and enforced e-coupons through the SSP app, available on the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.

However, the public is allowed to finish up their supply of scratch-and-display coupons by March 31, after which payment for parking will only be available via the SSP app.

"So far, public reception has been very good. There are maybe two or three complaints as some do not understand how the app works.

"We have explained to them how SSP is much easier to use and saves time even for senior citizens, or those who do not own smartphones or visiting from outside of Selangor, as they can easily get the e-coupons through the appointed agents."

Ng said that local councils, along with Smart Selangor Delivery Unit (SSDU), the developer of SSP, will also conduct an awareness campaign to encourage more people to download and use the app.

"More people will be invited to become e-coupon agents. Those who are interested can apply through the SSP app and they will get a commission for their service," he said, adding that convenience store owners are appointed as agents.

As of Feb 22, a total of 100 convenience store owners have been selected as agents to assist in the smooth implementation of the e-coupons.

Less maintenance

The SSP app has made enforcement work easier as council workers can now scan a vehicle's plate number to check its parking status.

He said based on a survey, there was an increase of between 30 and 50 per cent in the number of people paying for parking after the SSP app was introduced.

"So it is not that people do not want to pay (for their parking) but they may be discouraged by the hassle as sometimes the coin machines break down or the parking coupons are jammed, or by having to buy separate parking coupons from different local councils," he said.

By using SSP, local councils can also reduce the cost of running parking lots as they no longer need to appoint contractors to service the parking machines, which cost a lot.

"SSDU fully maintains the app and system, so the local councils only need to ensure that the on-road parking bays are painted every one or two years," he said.

Enhancing parking

Ng said the big data collected from SSP would be used to enhance Selangor's parking system by identifying the need to increase parking bays or build multi-level car parks in congested areas.

He said that the data would also help the state enforce the two-hour parking rule in certain city areas, especially at highly sought-after locations like banks.

"This ruling will not cover the whole area but maybe for a certain number of parking lots. When office workers park their vehicles at a certain spot for the whole day, visitors often find it difficult to find empty slots during their short visit," he said.

He added that many cities have successfully implemented cashless parking, including Kuala Lumpur.



By ALANG BENDAHARA

AS the most progressive state in the country, Selangor has always taken the lead in all its pursuits, from matters relating to the economy to technology and digitalisation. Now it intends to do the same for the environment.

A month after the devastating Dec 18, 2021 floods that crippled the Klang Valley, Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari announced on Jan 24 that a special committee would be set up to address issues relating to climate change.

Amirudin said the committee would be tasked to formulate strategies to prepare for future disasters and scrutinise other side effects of climate change, such as the price of food and raw materials, to ensure the wellbeing of the people.

In conjunction with World Meteorological Day on March 23, *Selangor Journal* interviewed Tourism, Environment, and Green Technology Committee chairman Hee Loy Sian who is now in charge of the new portfolio on climate change.

Back in focus

After the 14th General Election, the entire component of the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti), the energy and green technology sector of the Ministry of Energy, Green Technology and Water (KeTTHA) and the Environment Management and Climate Change Division of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (NRE) have been restructured to form the Ministry of Energy, Science, Technology, Environment and Climate Change (Mestec).

After several leadership changes, the climate change portfolio was then dropped from the revamped ministries and is currently under the Ministry of Environment and Water (Kasa).

"During the Pakatan Harapan-led government, there was a portfolio for climate change in the ministry in charge of the environment at the Federal level. So we have always been concerned about this issue even though the previous government never gave focus to the issue," Hee told *Selangor Journal*.

"After last year's flood, experts and members of the public urged us to look again at climate change as it impacts on the environment, causing especially an increase in temperature.

"So now I think Selangor is the only state in the country to have a Standing Committee for Climate Change. The Federal government used to have it but disassembled it," Hee said.

Existing projects

Hee said that even before announcing the new portfolio, Selangor had already initiated several policies and initiatives to reduce carbon emissions.

Blazing the green trail

"Climate change is related to carbon emissions, so it is an environmental issue. Some of our focus, such as adopting the Low Carbon City Framework (LCCF) for the local councils, relates to it. My other portfolio on the environment and green technology also addresses this issue," he said.

With a yearly allocation of RM3 million for the environment and RM2.5 million for green technology, Hee said they had implemented various projects and initiatives to address climate change in all 12 local councils and nine districts as well as worked with multiple government agencies and non-government organisations.

Among the initiatives taken is a 25-year moratorium on logging in the state from 2010 until 2035 and the installation of solar panels in a collaborative effort with TNB at the Selangor State Secretariat Building and nine District Land and Mines Offices which will be completed this year.

"We have also built large-scale solar farms on disused lakes in Kuala Langat and are in the midst of approving more large-scale farms in Selangor to support renewable energy initiatives," he said.

Hee said that Selangor is also planning to reduce landfills as currently 100 per cent of the state's waste goes there, posing a fire hazard and a risk of leaching that can pollute rivers and underground water.

"Selangor produces 7,000 tonnes of domestic waste every day, so we want to reduce our dependence on landfills. Soon, we will build waste-to-energy plants that can incinerate waste to produce electricity.

"The first plant will be at the Jeram landfill with a capacity of 1,000 tonnes, the second will be at the same site, while the third will be built in Tanjung 12. State government-owned Worldwide Holdings will undertake these projects," he said.

In addition to that, Hee said they



Once some data is available, the committee will sit down and discuss ways to overcome our problems and make recommendations on policies that the state government can adopt

Hee Loy Sian

have also received an application from a Federal government-linked company interested in building a waste-to-energy plant in Rawang.

Hee said the state supports the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, which is in line with the Low Carbon City Framework and the state government's effort to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 40 per cent by 2030.

"The Selangor government will also give priority to buying products that are certified as green-friendly," he said.

Engaging experts

Hee, who is now state executive councillor for tourism, environment, climate change and green technology, and Orang Asli affairs, said the inclusion of the new portfolio would have a significant impact on the state and its citizens in the long run.

"We will establish a council headed by scientists and experts on climate change including professors and NGOs to discuss and frame strategies to identify its

causes and how we can reduce carbon emissions in Selangor, as well as how to overcome the causes of floods," he said.

So far, responses from some of the experts have been encouraging and they will continue to engage more in the coming months.

Hee said he would apply for additional funds for the new portfolio, in the range of between RM500,000 and RM1 million.

"We will be researching to gather data on areas like the level of carbon emissions coming from vehicles, factories, power plants and others. In the case of climate change, people will not get to see its impact in the short term as there is a need for research to collect the data.

"We cannot expect the council and committee to get it all done in three months. To obtain the data the experts need to conduct experiments on the weather, tides and the carbon emissions in the Klang Valley."

Hee, however, expects data to start coming in from six months to a year.

"Once some data is available, the committee will sit down and discuss ways to overcome our problems and make recommendations on policies that the state government can adopt," he added.



By NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI

IN every cell in the human body, there is a nucleus where our genes are stored. These genes carry the codes responsible for all the traits we inherit from our parents and are grouped along thread-like structures called chromosomes. Typically, the nucleus of each cell contains 23 pairs of chromosomes. When an extra copy (triplication) of chromosome 21 happens, a baby with Down Syndrome comes into being.

Each year, on the 21st day of the third month of the calendar — specially chosen to represent the triplication of the 21st chromosome — the world unites to celebrate people born with Down Syndrome and recognise their achievements, struggles, dreams and hopes.

In conjunction with World Down Syndrome Day, *Selangor Journal* reaches out to three educators at the Selangor Educational Support Centre for Special Needs Children (Anis Centre) directly involved in teaching children with Down Syndrome to share their wealth of experience in the field.

'They matter'

Teacher Muhammad Ikhran Ehsan said that just like educating neurotypical children, lessons with Down Syndrome children must first and foremost be fun.

"The children are delightful, and they are friendly. They love activities that tickle their fancy. To be honest, I have not encountered any difficulties when teaching them. They can under-



From left: Muhammad Ikhran Ehsan, Nurul Husna Shuib and Danial Al Rashid Haron

Celebrating the extra chromosome

stand simple instructions very well.

"What I have to do is to create lessons that are centred around their daily routines, such as how they should handle their meals, their toilet etiquette, table manners and so on.

"We must ensure that the children can be independent in managing their routines, which is one of the major factors in determining whether they are fit to join a primary school or not," he said when met at the Anis Centre recently.

When asked about the level of awareness people have towards the Down Syndrome community, Muhammad Ikhran said he realises that parents nowadays

are more open-minded in integrating their special needs children into the community.

"I have encountered parents who are embarrassed and reluctant to admit that their child was born with disabilities and refuse to let people know about it. What is there to be embarrassed about? Everyone is living different lives. Why do we need to compare our lives with others?"

"As community members, we also have a role to play. If we see parents struggling to handle their Down Syndrome child in public, such as at shopping malls, parks or restaurants, do not stare at them. It is better to let the parents deal with the situation and go our own way.

"However, I am glad that the awareness level has got better over the years. As a teacher, I hope that Down Syndrome children will be given fair treatment when presented with job opportunities once they become adults. By letting them work, they know that they matter too," he said.

Struggles

Occupational therapist at Anis Centre Nurul Husna Shuib said Down Syndrome children often have difficulty articulating their words. This is because their tongues are larger and thicker than average.

"Nonetheless, the condition never stops them from communicating with their teachers and friends," she said.

"Another thing worth noting is that these children also usually have underlying illnesses such as heart disease and hyperthyroidism. Hence, their condition can be different depending on the

severity of their illnesses."

Nurul Husna, who has a brother with Down Syndrome, also shared that sometimes, simple movements can be strenuous for these special needs children because of their weak muscles.

"For example, the movement to pull up their pants after a wash, it looks easy to us but not to them. To overcome this, I encourage parents or caregivers to do more physical activities with them to improve their muscle strength," she added.

Goals

Anis Centre assistant manager Danial Al Rashid Haron said since the centre was opened in September last year, they have received an overwhelming response from parents wanting to enrol their children.

"Through once-a-week intervention classes, the parents hope that their children can make significant progress, including being independent when they finally enrol in primary school and be able to read and write simple words.

"These are the two main things we are focusing on. The children will master at least one life skill when they grow up.

"Other than Down Syndrome children, we also enrol children with other disabilities such as Autism, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder and Global Developmental Delay," he said.

In August 2021, the Selangor government established Anis Centre as an educational support hub for special needs children aged two to six at the Ideal Convention Centre (IDCC) in Shah Alam.

State executive councillor for women and family development Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud said the centre's services include screening and early intervention.



By NASUHA
BADRUL HUZAINI

Since 1911, International Women's Day has been celebrated around the globe on March 8. The over-a-century-long idea to commemorate women's rights and contributions have been pivotal in providing a platform to get voices heard and raise awareness about gender equality.

Themed Break the Bias this year, IWD celebrates women's social, economic, cultural, and political achievements regardless of their religions, beliefs, or skin colour.

In Malaysia, the 2022 National Women's Day celebration will be held from March 6 to 8, aiming to highlight the importance of achieving equality and to ensure that women's potential is optimised for the country's sustenance and future.

In an interview with Selangor Journal recently, Wanita Berdaya Selangor (WBS) chief executive officer Siti Kamariah Ahmad Subki shares her ideas and elaborates on the women empowerment initiatives at the state level.

According to Siti Kamariah, the theme Break the Bias itself has provided women with a voice, an amplified one that hopes to narrow the gender gap and provide avenues for women to keep advancing despite any situation they face.

"As a women's empowerment-oriented organisation, WBS has a role to play, which is to ensure that women's rights in Selangor are well taken care of through gender mainstreaming.

"By continuously educating, they can provide a clearer approach for policy makers, decision makers and stakeholders to always be inclusive of women. This practice has been ongoing at the Selangor state level and I hope it will be expanded to other states as well," she said.

Initiatives

Siti Kamariah said WBS's initiatives are the women empowerment programmes carried out through its Wanita Berdaya Centre (WBC).

"Programmes such as Women Leadership Academy and Women2Win were initiated to empower women in Selangor to have more skills to ensure that they can maximise their potential in their respective fields.

"In the 2022 Selangor Budget, the state government has allocated RM5 million for women's agenda and we have come up with a comprehensive line-up of programmes which tentatively will be held throughout the year.

"This includes the Selangor Housewives' Crafts and Products Expo (HaSSel)


International
Women's Day

Levelling the playing field



“The Gender Mainstreaming Project aims to change the mindsets of decision makers and government servants to form public policies that are more gender sensitive.”

Siti Kamariah
Ahmad Subki

that provides a platform for small and medium-sized female-led enterprises, mainly made up of single mothers and housewives, to introduce their products to be commercialised.

"It is not an easy journey for the women. The analogy is like the women are in a marathon run, not a sprint," she said.

Changing mindsets

The Selangor government has a Gender Mainstreaming Project which is already in its second year of implementation.

"The project aims to promote women's rights and address discrimination towards the group, apart from changing the mindsets of decision makers and government servants to form public policies that are more gender sensitive," Siti Kamariah said.

Delving further, she said WBS is also planning to introduce a new programme known as the Selangor Women Assembly Programme (SWAP), where 56 women will be selected to represent the 56

constituencies in Selangor to discuss several motions related to women's issues.

"This programme will provide some exposure to the participants on how to debate at the Selangor State Assembly or during a decision-making process. They will undergo capacity development training to get them ready for a real debate during SWAP.

"This is part of our efforts to accelerate the process of having 30 per cent of women as policy makers or state representatives," she said, adding that the programme also aims to polish leadership skills among women in male-dominated sectors.

Siti Kamariah said a large chunk of the state's budget for women will be used to implement programmes throughout the year.

"We will also collaborate with several non-governmental organisations to run the programmes," she added.

Technology as a means

In November last year, the SELamat

hotline was set up under the management of WBS to offer crisis support to victims of domestic violence and has been in operation since.

The hotline operates 24 hours and is managed by WBS staff and volunteers.

"Domestic violence victims can opt for counselling sessions and serious cases, the hotline will help to provide temporary shelter for the victims," she said.

In line with current trends and technology advancement, online platforms have been the preferred communication method for WBS to spread the latest information about their programmes or assistance needed by women in Selangor.

"Social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter are the way to go as they can deliver messages faster. With all the systems in place, we are hopeful that more women will be well informed and exposed to our empowerment programs," she said.

Shatiri's open-door policy

By NASUHA BADRUL HUZAINI

Kota Damansara, a township under the purview of the Petaling Jaya City Council, has undergone significant development in the past few years, with shopping malls and residential towers sprouting up across its landscape. Spanning 4,000 hectares between Subang and Petaling Jaya, it is not hard to understand why the area is among the most sought after for those who want to enjoy urban city life that does not compromise on nature. As the state representative for Kota Damansara, Shatiri Mansor has promised that the wellbeing of its constituents will always be his priority. Here, he tells *Selangor Journal* more.



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

Shatiri Mansor (SM): Kota Damansara is well known for its aerospace industry as the Subang Skypark (Subang Airport) is located in there.

SJ: What is the main attraction in Kota Damansara?

SM: One of the most visited places is the Kota Damansara Community Forest, which has become a popular destination for nearby residents if they want to go hiking or jungle trekking on weekends. In fact, many outsiders also choose to spend their quality time with friends and family there. Apart from that, Kota Damansara is

famous for its uptown bazaar called Kota Dame, located in Section 6. Visitors would drop by this place for shopping and food hunting.

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

SM: Among the more prominent issues we face is overdevel-

opment, resulting in traffic congestion and substandard public facilities. However, the Damansara-Shah Alam Elevated Expressway (DASH), which will be ready by year-end, will help to ease some of our traffic problems. It will provide the people here with a shortcut to the northern part of Selangor. We are also promoting the use of public transport such as the Mass Rapid Transit to help ease congestion along Jalan Sungai Buloh, Jalan Subang Airport, Persiaran Surian and Persiaran Mahogani.

SJ: What are your achievements so far in your cons-

tituency?

SM: I would say that my most significant achievement is providing better avenues for communication with my constituents by establishing the Whatsapp hotlines 012 361 6151/012 998 7220 as well as the shatirimansor.com website. These platforms have been of help, especially when the constituents want to file urgent reports or have specific questions to ask. My team and I will get back to them within 48 hours. We often receive complaints about damaged roads, domestic and bulk waste collection, clogged drains and wild

monkeys and dogs.

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

SM: From day one since I took on the job, I have implemented an 'open-door' policy, which means anyone can come and see me at a specific time and day without making an appointment beforehand. My office is open from 7.30pm to 10.30pm every Wednesday. Unless I am unwell, I will be there. From the feedback we received, the constituents are comfortable with this approach as they can channel their concerns directly to me.



E-sports proving critics wrong

By **MUSTAKIM RAMLI**

GOMBAK - Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said the e-sports industry had shown positive development in Selangor.

He said naysayers had thought that the programme was unproductive and would not benefit the younger genera-

tion when it was first introduced in the state seven years ago.

"I am pleased to have been the one to kickstart the initiative when I was a state executive councillor. At that time, many were cynical and thought it would be a waste of time. Why be involved in something uncertain?"

"But at the time, I was con-

fident that it would grow and today it has been proven true as its popularity has reached both national and global levels," he said after launching the E-Sports Management Workshop at Dewan Kampung Melayu Batu Caves here on Feb 19.

Amirudin said the industry is not merely about video games,

but that it also provides skills and helps to generate income for those who venture into it.

"Team Selangor is involved in introducing e-games in a better and managed manner.

"I believe that its participants will not just 'play games' but also recognise the opportunities that lie ahead."

This year, the state intends to focus on its players, commentators and coaches in a three-way approach to produce more players of international standard.

The Selangor e-Sports Association said this will create an e-sports ecosystem and help to build careers with lucrative salaries.

A show of true grit at the BATC



SHAH ALAM - The Malaysian men's team clinched their maiden Badminton Asia Team Championships (BATC) title with a 3-0 win over defending champions Indonesia here on Feb 20.

Malaysia's win over Indonesia's second-stringers dashed their arch-rivals' hope of securing their fourth straight BATC title since the tournament began in 2016.

In the opening match, Malaysia's All England champion Lee Zii Jia got off to a rocky start as he lost to Chico Aura Dwi Wardoyo 14-21 in the first game.

Buoyed by a 200-strong home crowd at the Setia City Convention Centre, Zii Jia stepped up a gear with a series of fiery attacks which saw the world number seven take a 16-6 lead over the 23-year-old Indonesian before sealing the second game at 21-12.

In the rubber game, Zii Jia proved too strong for Chico,

drubbing him 21-10 to deliver the first point for Malaysia.

In the next match, Tokyo Olympics 2020 bronze medallists Aaron Chia-Soh Wooi Yik had to slog for 56 minutes to beat Leo Rolly Carnando-Daniel Marthin, who are ranked 28th in the world.

The world number seven Aaron-Wooi Yik lost the first game 17-21 but recovered to win the second 21-13. The Malaysians clinched the nerve-wracking rubber game 21-18 to put Malaysia two up.

Young shuttler Ng Tze Yong then rose to the occasion to seal the championship point for the hosts.

The 21-year-old Tze Yong, ranked 47th in the world, put on a sublime performance as he subdued the world number 90 Ikhsan Leonardo Imanuel Rumbay in straight games.

After taking the first game 21-14, Tze Yong kept up the mo-

mentum in the second before delivering a powerful smash to wrap up the match 21-15 and crown Malaysia as the new king of Asia.

The crowd went wild. The Malaysian team rushed into the court to celebrate the historic win.

It was sweet revenge for Malaysia, as they lost 1-3 to Indonesia in the 2020 final in Manila.

Despite the loss to Malaysia, Indonesia could still afford a smile as their women's team won their first-ever BATC title on Feb 20.

The Indonesians defeated South Korea 3-1 in the women's final.

The Tengku Permaisuri of Selangor, Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin, watched the final and graced the prize presentation ceremony. - Bernama

Big tourneys can raise spirit of #SelangorBangkit

SHAH ALAM - The hosting of prestigious sporting tournaments such as the recently concluded 2022 Badminton Asia Team Championships (BATC) can help to promote Selangor both locally and abroad.

State executive councillor for sports Mohd Khairuddin Othman said it would also help promote sports and bring people of different races, religions and cultures together.

"Through the spirit of #SelangorBangkit, it is hoped that the organisation of a

prestigious tour-



ournament like this (BATC) can further invigorate the spirit of sports and strengthen unity among the people, as well as raise the name of Selangor at the international level," he said in a statement on Feb 21.

He said the six-day tournament that started on Feb 15, has successfully attracted the participation of 147 shuttlers from eight countries.

"The countries that competed in the competition are Japan, South Korea, Indonesia, India, Hong Kong, Singapore, Kazakhstan and Malaysia," he said.

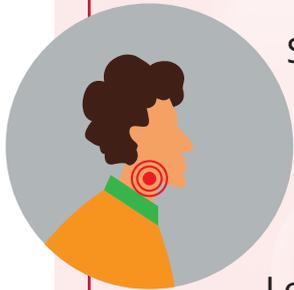
He also congratulated the national badminton squad for winning the men's category and the Indonesians for winning the women's category.

This is the first time Selangor hosted the BATC which is coordinated by the Selangor State Sports Council (MSNS) in collaboration with Badminton Asia and Badminton Association of Malaysia (BAM).



Covid-19: Know Your Mild and Moderate Categories

Category 2A (Mild)



Sore throat or runny nose with no fever or shortness of breath

Cough with no fever or shortness of breath

Loss of sense of taste but still has appetite

Loss of sense of smell

Having diarrhoea not more than twice in 24 hours and urinating less

Feeling nauseous and vomiting

Mild lethargy but able to carry out daily activities

Muscle aches but able to carry out daily activities



Category 2B (Moderate)



Persistent fever (two days and more) or new-onset fever

Difficulty in breathing when carrying out activities (exertional dyspnea)

Chest pain

No appetite

Lethargy especially when carrying out daily activities or after waking up

Need assistance to walk

Worsening or persistent symptoms of cough, nausea, vomiting or diarrhoea

Reduced level of consciousness

Urinating less in the last 24 hours



Individuals who are Category 1 (no symptoms) and Category 2A Covid-19 positive and are not at high risk (under 60 years of age with no comorbidities) **SHOULD NOT VISIT** the Covid-19 Assessment Centre (CAC)

