



SELANGOR JOURNAL

The Selangor government has been swift to address the state's water needs. Recognising the importance of providing residents with a reliable and sustainable supply, the administration in 2020 introduced the Raw Water Security Scheme, which oversees the construction of a hybrid off-river augmentation system capable of supplying 600 million litres per day. The project has reached its midpoint. It is on track to go live in early 2024, putting an end to the state's challenges with the vital resource.

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Bold plans for water



Large-scale repairs in the works

By SHEEDA FATHIL

SHAH ALAM - Extensive road resurfacing works that are taking place in all nine districts in Selangor are expected to be fully completed by the end of July, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said the Mega Road Resurfacing Project covers a distance of 94.9 kilometres, involving 66 roads in Petaling, followed by Klang (39), Gombak (29), Hulu Langat (27), Sepang (19), Sabak Bernam (17), Kuala Langat (16), Kuala Selangor (11), and Hulu Selangor (8).

"The large-scale project, with an allocation of RM50 million, is an initiative of the state government to ensure that the state's roads are in good condition to ensure the safety of users and reduce accidents.

"The selection of roads for repair is based on the highest number of complaints received from the public, which they report via Twitter or from the state's road maintenance company Infrasel Sdn Bhd's app," he said when met after inspecting the road resurfacing work on Jalan 22/1, Persiaran Jubli Perak in Section 22, here, on June 1.

In response to whether the state government will focus on upgrading motorcycle lanes, Amirudin said they would consider it, but currently, the focus is primarily on main roads.

"Many of the motorcycle lanes are on highways, which are beyond our jurisdiction, but we will examine them if



Roadworks being carried out at night at Jalan 22/1, Persiaran Jubli Perak in Shah Alam on June 1

there are any on the Federal Highway, and if there is more (funding), we will implement it in the final phase.

"Overall, the state has received RM500 million for the Malaysian Road Records Information System (Marris)

and we are focusing on areas with high complaints that have not been upgraded so far."

On May 13, Amirudin announced that Selangor received an additional allocation of RM2 million from the Ministry

of Rural and Regional Development to carry out road repairs in the state's rural areas.

For its part, Infrasel carried out over 39,000 road resurfacing works in 2021 and 2022.

New technologies for old roads

SHAH ALAM - In recognising the need for effective solutions for the maintenance of Selangor's ageing roads, executive councillor for infrastructure and public amenities Izham Hashim (*pic*) said the state government is looking at the use of new technologies.

This includes new road-patching machinery, the Jetpatcher, and exploring the use of modified road construction materials, such as rubberised asphalt and shredded plastic, to enhance the lifespan of road surfaces.

Though costly, the Jetpatcher investment has proven its effectiveness as it utilises hot mix for road resurfacing works, unlike current cold mix solutions.

"With the Jetpatcher, there's no need for road cutting. Simply fill the potholed area and it will seamlessly integrate and form a durable bond. Additionally, we are also acquiring a thermal patcher and introducing modified asphalt, mixed with rubberised crumbs, shred-

ded plastic, and even bamboo," said Izham in an interview with *Selangor Journal* on June 1.

As the country's most developed state, Selangor has an extensive road network spanning over 20,000 km.

Izham said Selangor has implemented a road asset management system, the Integrated Road Access Application (i-RAA), to effectively manage the state's vast road network.

Managed by state-owned Infrasel Sdn Bhd, the system allows the monitoring and tracking of road conditions, including width, length, upgrades, resurfacing frequency, traffic patterns, and even potholes or other damage.

"This data-driven approach helps predict maintenance needs and allows for more efficient routine maintenance.

"To promptly address road issues, the

state government also pays attention to feedback received through social media and other channels. They maintain a record of problem areas and prioritise their upgrading efforts accordingly," he said.

Izham also said vehicles equipped with cameras are being utilised to capture road defects, including potholes and drainage issues.

The state allocates an average annual budget of RM500 million solely for road maintenance purposes. This year, an additional RM50 million has been approved.

However, Izham emphasised that expenditure on road-related projects could reach nearly RM1 billion, covering the construction of new roads and ongoing maintenance.

While highlighting the state government's commitment to upgrading its ageing road infrastructure, Izham also

acknowledged the concerns raised by the public regarding the quality and longevity of road repairs and construction.

"There are a few key points to consider. Firstly, roads have a limited lifespan. After around 20 years, more than 50 per cent of the roads in our country have already exceeded their intended lifespan. Therefore, after 20 years, it is necessary to upgrade rather than resurface."

Izham highlighted that Selangor faces a higher-than-usual volume of traffic, especially from heavy vehicles that often exceed weight limits to maximise profits. This challenge is compounded by a poorly maintained drainage system, resulting in stagnant water accumulation on roads and rapidly deteriorating road surfaces.

"Moreover, our region has challenging soil conditions, including marine clay and peat. Implementing piling throughout the entire road network is impractical and prohibitively expensive due to these soil conditions," he said.



Job fair to visit nine districts

SHAH ALAM - More than 10,000 jobs will be on offer to the public during the Selangor Jelajah Jaminan Kerja (JobCare) roadshow in nine districts, starting in June.

State executive councillor for worker empowerment V. Ganabatirau said the initiative by the Selangor Workers Empowerment Unit (UPPS), in collaboration with the Social Security Organisation (Socso), will involve approximately 200 companies from various sectors.

"This carnival will travel to nine districts in the state until December.

"Selangor residents who are seeking employment should make use of this golden opportunity," he told *SelangorKini*.

Ganabatirau added that 120 individuals have successfully secured employment via the Selangor Career Carnival 2023, held on May 6 and 7.

"A total of 959 applicants are still eligible for the second interview session," he said.

Previously, Ganabatirau said a total of 2,500 individuals have been placed in jobs under the state government's initiative, through career carnivals conducted by Unit Pemberdayaan Pekerja Selangor (UPPS) from November 2021 until May 6 this year.

Reservoirs operating at full capacity

By **SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM**

SHAH ALAM - The state has sufficient water supply for the next four months if the heatwave persists without any rainfall, according to Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

In a statement on May 18, he said Selangor's seven reservoirs across five districts are operating at 100 per cent capacity as of May 17. This development comes amid the hot weather conditions caused by the El Nino phenomenon.

Amirudin added the four-month projection for water supply is based on current water demands. As an additional precaution, the state authorities have also identified 98 ponds as alternative water sources, collectively offering an estimated 34 million cubic metres in storage capacity.

Earlier, the Menteri Besar chaired the Selangor State Executive Council-



lor meeting, where three resolutions were passed, including finding alternative water sources for the state.

Eight reservoirs were identified. They are the Sungai Selangor Reservoir, the Sungai Tinggi Reservoir, the Tasik Subang Reservoir, the Sungai

Langat Reservoir, the Semenyih Reservoir, the Kolam Off River Storage Labu, the Klang Gates Reservoir, and the Batu Reservoir in Gombak.

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More water treatment plants to guarantee reserves

KUALA LANGAT - Selangor aims to have a sufficient water reserve margin with a total capacity of 8,765 million litres per day (MLD) by 2030, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said the Sungai Rasau water treatment plant (WTP), the Langat 2 WTP, and the Labohan Dagang WTP are part of the government's efforts to ensure there is sufficient water supply to meet the needs of the people of Selangor and the Klang Valley.

"With the WTPs, we will have enough reserves to ensure constant water supply during pollution incidents and disruptions.

"The construction of all the WTPs will increase the capacity by 41.5 per cent by 2030, with a water production capacity of up to 8,765 MLD," he said at the ground-breaking ceremony of the Rasau Water Supply Scheme in Kampung Seri Cheeding, Banting, here, on May 30.

Also present were Minister of Natural Resources, Environment, and Climate Change Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, state executive councillor for infrastructure and public amenities Izham Hashim and Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Air Selangor) acting chief executive officer Abas Abdullah.

Amirudin further explained that the first phase of the Labohan Dagang WTP



Amirudin (centre) at the ground-breaking ceremony for the Rasau Water Supply Scheme in Kampung Seri Cheeding, Banting, Kuala Langat on May 30

project is now completed and operational, ensuring that Kuala Langat and parts of Sepang would not be affected should there be pollution in Sungai Selangor.

"The construction of the Sungai Rasau WTP does not stand alone because, at the same time, we will commence the second phase of the Labohan Dagang WTP. With these efforts, Kuala Langat will not be affected like before when pollution incidents occur.

"The second phase (Labohan Dagang WTP) will add a capacity of 200 MLD with

an estimated cost of RM480 million and is expected to be completed by 2029," he said.

Meanwhile, Amirudin said that the Sungai Rasau WTP is the largest and most advanced plant in Southeast Asia, with the ability to produce clean water supply of 1,400 MLD.

He said the long-term project aims to increase the water reserve margin, especially for users in the Klang, Petaling, and Kuala Langat regions.

"The first phase costs RM3.42 billion, and RM2.12 billion for the second

phase. The high cost not only covers the construction process and the use of the latest methods like ozone technology but also land acquisition that requires a lot of expenditure," he said.

Amirudin also said the Rasau Water Supply Scheme is an additional initiative to ensure constant water supply in Selangor, the Klang Valley and Putrajaya that will benefit some eight million residents.

"The construction of this latest water treatment plant is a significant milestone in the operation and management of Air Selangor.

"This is also the state government's effort to ensure the sustainability of water supply to the state and the country," he said.

Located in Kampung Seri Cheeding, the first phase of the Rasau Water Supply Scheme, expected to be completed in 2025, is capable of producing 700 MLD of water.

Meanwhile, the second phase of the project, expected to be completed by 2030, aims to increase clean water production to 1,400 MLD.

The project includes the use of nine former tin mining ponds covering an area of 489 hectares, for which the Federal government has channelled an allocation of RM1.18 billion.



Young ambassadors to foster goodwill

SHAH ALAM - Selangor Unity Ambassadors will be appointed in each of the 56 state constituencies to promote the spirit of goodwill and understanding at the grassroots level.

State executive councillor for unity Dr Siti Mariah Mahmud said the selection process is conducted by a non-governmental organisation (NGO) based on merit and the eligibility of the participants.

"We welcome all, especially the youth, who want to become Unity Ambassadors in the 56 state constituencies in Selangor.

"These ambassadors will be responsible for assisting in various initiatives and collaborating with Kawasan Rukun Tetangga (KRT) to promote unity," she said when met following the launch of the state-level Malaysia Madani Unity Week celebration at Taman Tasik Shah Alam here, on May 27.

Dr Siti Mariah said the state government has approved an allocation of RM400,000 for the appointment of the Unity Ambassadors.

She said that the unity-related programmes would be conducted continuously and consistently to foster a sense of harmony among the people.

Meanwhile, Dr Siti Mariah said the unity among Selangor's multiracial community is the state's most valuable asset and the foundation for its progress.

She said this situation must always be preserved to counter those seeking to fan the flames of racism.

"Selangor is a state with many races. All ethnic groups are here and it is akin to a 'small Malaysia'.

"This is why we must safeguard our existing unity. We reject those who want to stoke racial issues as this unity is our strength, not our weakness," she added.

Some 5,000 visitors attended the Unity Week event as early as 7am to participate in activities such as a unity run, cultural performances, a picnic, and more.

Themed 'Unity in Diversity', the celebrations will continue on May 28 at Taman Tasik Cempaka, Bandar Baru Bangi.

The initiative comes under the Civil Malaysia Unity Campaign, which is celebrated throughout the country in the last week of May every year.

Putting children at the forefront

By **SHEEDA FATHIL**

SHAH ALAM - Selangor is in the process of introducing a child-related policy that provides various programmes at the grassroots level to shape a resilient future generation, says Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari.

The Menteri Besar said that the Selangor Child Development Policy and Action Plan 2022-2025 focuses on all aspects, including children's welfare, health, education, and safety.

"This policy, which has 10 pillars, has been presented to and approved by the Selangor State Legislative Assembly. This pioneering policy is believed to be able to produce a generation that is resilient enough to face the challenges of today and the future.

"I believe that this progressive and comprehensive policy will position Selangor as one of the leading states, especially in terms of well-being.

"The steps taken are in line with the current situation. The extensive involvement of stakeholders will provide room for improvement and enhance Selangor's ecosystem in developing the identity and capabilities of children," he said in his speech at the closing ceremony of the Selangor Children's Carnival 2023 and the launch of the Selangor Child Development Policy and Action Plan 2022-2025 at Dewan Raja Muda Musa here, on May 28.

Amirudin said that more comprehensive policies need to be implemented as the children in the current generation have been greatly impacted by the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic.

"Therefore, the state government strives to create initiatives under Iltizam Selangor Penyayang, the Selangor Prihatin economic stimulus packages and Kita Selangor to effectively address the gaps that arise among children.

"Caregivers and other stakeholders in childcare should be attentive to their physical changes and

development, skills learning, as well as socialisation and interaction with the outside world to ensure that they are nurtured holistically," he said.

The 10 pillars of the Selangor Child Development Policy and Action Plan 2022-2025 are:

- Parental and prenatal preparation
- Early childhood education and care
- Education (primary and secondary levels)
- Health
- Family welfare
- Social and communication development
- Technology in child development
- Infrastructure and safety
- Socioeconomic level of families
- Stakeholder involvement

Meanwhile, Yayasan Warisan Anak Selangor (Yawas) is optimistic that the policy will strengthen efforts towards developing children's potential.

Its general manager Gan Pei Nei said that the future leadership and success of the state depend on the formation of a brilliant, visionary, and dynamic young generation.

"The formulation of this policy demonstrates the commitment and strategic efforts of the state government to channel trained resources to the community, especially children, comprehensively.

"The policy, which is suitable for the current situation, is expected to enhance programmes and initiatives for children and empower stakeholders to be actively involved in the development process of this young generation," she said at the event.

Gan also urged everyone to give their full attention and love to children, regardless of their background or circumstances.

"This group is a highly valuable asset, and they deserve protection, education and support from families, communities and the country," she added.

National Day theme a clarion call for unity

KUALA LUMPUR - 'Malaysia Madani: Tekad Perpaduan Penuhi Harapan' has been chosen as the National Day and Malaysia Day 2023 (HKHM) celebration theme.

Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil said this theme aligns with the government's commitment to developing the country towards unity, peace and prosperity.

The theme is also supported by the concept of Malaysia Madani as the master key inspired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim to ensure that the people enjoy all forms of progress and modernity based on mutual respect and compassion.

"The selection of this theme is the result of strategic collaboration among, and deliberation by, a panel of 16 experts from various fields, including academics, cultural personalities, media practitioners, youth organisations, non-governmental organisations, Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, youth

icons and social media influencers.

"In line with this aspiration, I am glad to announce that the Malaysia Madani logo has also been selected as the official logo for the HKHM 2023 celebration," he said when launching the HKHM 2023 logo and theme at the Esplanade, KLCC Park here, on May 27.

Also present were his deputy Teo Nie Ching, Communications and Digital Ministry secretary-general Datuk Mohamad Fauzi Md Isa, Information Department director-general Datuk Mohd Sukari Abdul Hamid and Malaysian National News Agency (Bernama) chief executive officer Roslan Ariffin.

Fahmi, who is also the HKHM 2023's main committee chairman, said the logo features a raised hand symbolising the Rukun Negara pledge and the primary colours of the Jalur Gemilang reflecting the identity and patriotic spirit of Malaysians.- Bernama

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Selangor takes pole position in 12MP review

SHAH ALAM - Selangor has recorded the highest contribution to the country's economic growth, recording a total of RM7.1 billion for the economic and infrastructure sectors.

Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari said that both sectors projected over RM2 billion for the programmes and projects under the 12th Malaysia Plan (12MP).

"A total of 231 physical projects have been planned with 24.7 per cent of them completed. A total of 57 projects have been successfully completed, 28 are still in progress and 146 are still in the planning phase.

"This is in addition to the RM6 billion allocated by the Ministry of Finance to support the implementation of 559 proj-

ects and programmes listed in the 3rd Rolling Plan under 12MP," said the Menteri Besar during the 12MP Mid-Term Review engagement session at the Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) Convention Centre here, on June 1.

Amirudin also said that the First Selangor Plan (RS-1) is rolling out as scheduled and that the five-year blueprint aims for a smart, prosperous and livable state.

The plan, announced in July last year, outlines over 200 long-term development projects and also includes welfare initiatives to strengthen the service delivery system for the people.

Amirudin also expressed the wish to make Selangor a sustainable state, so as

to balance development and guarantee social security.

"As the nation's most developed state, Selangor has outlined 262 projects via RS-1, which also includes welfare, empowerment, and sustainability initiatives.

"We should start digitising government services so that the people receive benefits and civil servants can be assisted with the use of technology," he said.

Meanwhile, Amirudin said the Sabak Bernam Development Area (Sabda) initiative to transform the district into a logistics and smart agriculture hub will be launched by mid-June.

"As such, I hope some of RS-1's aspects can be applied to the 12MP half-term

study, which is being worked on," he said.

Sabda, a part of RS-1, encompasses the development of high-value crops over an approximate 1,317 hectares of area. It is expected to yield up to RM248 million annually.

Its main projects include the development of the Sekinchan fish landing complex, the construction of rest and treatment centres, and a soft drink business centre.

The RS-1 is supported by its four strategic themes, namely to focus on strengthening the economy; ensuring social inclusivity and the people's well-being; driving environmental sustainability; and providing good and effective governance.

State an eco-cultural haven for tourists, says exco

SHAH ALAM - Selangor is strategically leveraging its rich ecological and cultural resources to grow its tourism sector, says state executive councillor for tourism Hee Loy Sian.

Emphasising the state's cultural and ecological heritage, Hee stated that it would be able to attract visitors seeking a more meaningful and immersive experience while promoting sustainable development for the communities connected to the heritage sites.

Citing the Mah Meri Cultural Village as a prime example of Selangor's com-

mitment to promoting cultural heritage, Hee said that it provides visitors with an authentic encounter with the traditions and customs of the Mah Meri indigenous community.

"Selangor aims to curate and promote a diverse range of cultural and ecological experiences that allow tourists to immerse themselves in the local traditions, arts, and customs," he said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

Hee pointed out that foreign tourists particularly seek these types of experiences over regular shopping, as they

appreciate unique local charms that are not found elsewhere.

As home to the largest concentration of the Malaysian diaspora, Selangor is also abundant in unique locations, buildings, and cuisines that represent the country's diverse multiethnic communities, Hee added.

Regarding eco-tourism, Hee mentioned several notable destinations in the state that cater to eco-tourism enthusiasts, including Kuala Selangor, Sungai Besar, Sekinchan, and Sepang.

However, he noted that these locations lack five-star hotels that could attract more affluent tourists.

"Sepang, known for its dragon fruit farms, and Sekinchan, a town famous for rice cultivation, offer numerous homestay options and a variety of eco-tourism activities tailored to a specific segment of the market," Hee explained.

Hee acknowledged that visitors to these destinations often choose day trips instead of overnight stays. However, there is a demand for higher-quality accommodations from tourists who seek comfortable lodging while immersing themselves in local customs and activities.

"To cater to tourists who desire better accommodations but still want to experience local customs and activities, five-star or top-rated hotels should be built in these locations. This would greatly benefit the local communities," he emphasised.

In Kuala Selangor, a wetland nature

park serves as a habitat for a diverse range of resident and migratory bird species, showcasing the area's ecological allure. This park is just one of the many ecological charms found in Kuala Selangor.

Sungai Besar and Sekinchan, known for their support of agricultural and fishing activities, have become popular weekend getaway destinations.

To facilitate the development of top-tier hotels, Hee explained that the state government would assist private entities by providing suitable land at these locations.

"The state government does not have the funds to undertake such projects, but we will support private companies that recognise the value in building top-rated hotels at these locations. This collaborative approach aims to encourage private investment and promote the development of high-quality accommodations for tourists visiting these areas," he stated.

Hee previously said Selangor aims to attract over 3.5 million tourists to the state by the end of the year.

This goal is largely driven by the increasing number of foreign tourists, particularly from Japan, China, Korea, and Taiwan, he noted.

Hee also highlighted the positive development of luxury cruise tourism at the Port Klang Cruise Terminal (PKCT), with approximately 350,000 visitors arriving in December last year. The segment is targeting 500,000 visitors in 2023.



By SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM

KUALA LUMPUR - The Selangor Aviation Show (SAS) 2023 is expected to generate between RM500 million and RM1 billion in potential sales this year, which is a more modest estimate compared to last year's figures, according to state executive councillor for industry and trade Dato' Teng Chang Khim.

During an interview with *Agenda Awani* on May 17, he said SAS 2022 recorded RM1.65 billion in sales, but this figure also included several unexpected transactions.

Although the projected sales for SAS 2023 may seem pragmatic, Teng emphasised that the air show remains an opportunity for aerospace industry players to showcase their services and innovations while building connections.

"SAS provides a platform for industry players to introduce their services and showcase their latest innovations. Additionally, it helps facilitate networking between smaller industry players and major industry players, which in turn strengthens the supply chain and the overall ecosystem of the industry," he said.

The air show, hosted by the Selangor state government and organised by Invest Selangor, is now in its third edition. It was first launched in 2021 with the support of the Federal government to revitalise the aerospace industry in the state post-Covid-19.

This year's show is expected to attract at least 12,000 visitors and will be held from Sept 7 to 9 at the Skypark Regional Aviation Centre in Subang.

Teng added that the state government



Air show targets up to RM1b in sales

is committed to rejuvenating the aerospace industry in Selangor as it holds significant potential for the state and the nation.

Upwards of 67 per cent of the entire aerospace ecosystem is located in Selangor, which includes maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) services, as well as the training of skilled aerospace technicians and engineers.

Touching briefly on the redevelopment

of the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport or Subang Airport in Subang Jaya, he said the endeavour is being led by a private-public partnership, rather than being the sole responsibility of either the Federal or the state government.

"To redevelop Subang Airport, we cannot solely rely on the public sector. Currently, a private firm is already handling the operations of Subang Skypark.

"For me, this project should be a pub-

lic-private partnership, because if the private sector is willing to provide the capital, they will be more attentive to the needs of the business. Therefore, it is better for the private sector to spearhead the initiative," Teng said.

This April, it was reported that WCT Holdings Bhd will collaborate with Malaysia Airports Holdings Bhd (MAHB) to revamp Subang Airport at a cost of RM1.5 billion over a period of three years.

Govt cuts red tape for halal certification

PETALING JAYA - The state government has proposed the establishment of a one-stop centre to assist entrepreneurs in obtaining halal certification, according to state executive councillor for housing and urban wellbeing Rodziah Ismail.

She said the government has already initiated discussions with the State Islamic Religious Department (Jais) concerning this matter.

"Many people perceive obtaining halal certification as a difficult task. However, it is merely a misconception as they might not be aware of where to seek guidance or who to approach for advice.

"Therefore, our plan is to propose the creation of a 'one-stop centre', to streamline the process for entrepreneurs," Rodziah stated.

She also expressed her hopes for the prompt implementation of this proposal that will give entrepreneurs

in the halal industry better opportunities.

"I aspire to see entrepreneurs obtaining the halal certification within two to three months if they fulfil the specified requirements," Rodziah added.

The councillor was speaking during the officiation of the Halal Certification Preparation Course, Selangor Hijrah 2023, held at Hotel Tabung Haji in Kelana Jaya, here on May 24.

The course, organised by the state government in collaboration with Jais, marks its inaugural edition and is aimed at assisting entrepreneurs in expanding their businesses and tapping into the halal market.

Rodziah added that the course will soon be expanded to accommodate non-Muslim entrepreneurs, encouraging them to explore the potential growth of halal products within their respective businesses.

Selangor, Penang, Johor dominate exports

KUALA LUMPUR - Selangor, Penang, and Johor made up 70.5 per cent of Malaysia's total exports in April 2023, said the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM).

In a statement on May 26, it said the nation's exports stood at RM105.4 billion, while imports recorded RM92.6 billion, resulting in a total trade of RM198 billion during the month.

For imports, Selangor was the most significant contributor at 27.3 per cent, followed by Johor (23.3 per cent), Penang (20.3 per cent), Kuala Lumpur (7.9 per cent) and Kedah (5.5 per cent).

Imports also declined by RM11.5 billion or -11.1 per cent in April 2023 in most states, as compared with the same month of the previous year.

Penang's imports were reduced by -RM5.4 billion, Melaka (-RM3.3 billion), Selangor (-RM1.7 billion), Perak (-RM1.2 billion), Kedah (-RM861.5 million), Sarawak (-RM682.5 million), Neg-

eri Sembilan (-RM435.5 million), Pahang (-RM92.9 million) and Terengganu (-RM45.3 million).

However, imports increased in Johor by RM2.0 billion year-on-year, Kuala Lumpur (+RM284.1 million), Sabah (+RM94.8 million), Kelantan (+RM31.5 million), Perlis (+RM16.2 million) and Labuan (+RM2.4 million).

DOSM said Penang remained the top exporter with a share of 31.5 per cent, followed by Johor at 21.7 per cent, Selangor (17.3 per cent), Sarawak (7.0 per cent) and Kedah (4.6 per cent).

Overall, export performance by states in April 2023 decreased by RM22.2 billion (-17.4 per cent) year-on-year due to the lower exports in most states.

Selangor saw export ease by -RM6.6 billion, Penang (-RM4.1 billion), Sarawak (-RM2.9 billion) and Johor (-RM2.6 billion). - Bernama

E-merchants rake it in

By SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM

KUALA LUMPUR - Participants of the Top E-commerce and Merchant (Top ECM) Awards 2023 have achieved an unprecedented RM77.5 million in sales, making it the highest figure in the award's eight-year history.

Organised by the Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec), this year sees 602 participants, representing a 36.8 per cent increase compared to the 440 applicants who recorded RM58.9 million in total sales last year.

Speaking at the event, state executive councillor for local government, public transport, and New Village development Ng Sze Han said the awards have solidified Selangor's leading role in adopting digital technologies for business operations.

He said this is aligned with the state government's efforts to transform Selangor into a regional e-commerce hub.

"With the aim of becoming a leading regional e-commerce hub, Selangor aspires to be at the forefront of digital transformation and innovation by 2025. We envision an environment where businesses thrive, consumers can enjoy seamless online experiences, and our state becomes a preferred destination for e-commerce investments.

"To achieve this, Selangor via Sidec is investing in infrastructure, promoting digital skills training, and fostering strategic partnerships with industry players. I am delighted to share with everybody that the Top ECM programme plays a pivotal role in the development of Selangor's e-commerce," he said at the awards ceremony held at the Hilton Kuala Lumpur on May 27.

Also in attendance was Deputy Minister of Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives (Kuskop) Saraswathy Kandasami.

He added that by nurturing and supporting promising local enterprises, Top ECM has not only created job opportunities but also contributed to spurring economic growth.

"It has empowered our entrepreneurs to leverage the power of e-commerce, expand their market reach, and build sustainable businesses," he said.

The Top ECM Awards is a prestigious accolade presented by Sidec, which began in 2015. For the past five

years, Affin Bank Berhad has been the main sponsor of the awards.

Affin Islamic Bank chief executive officer Datuk Paduka Syed Mashafuddin Syed Badarudin took the opportunity to stress the importance of businesses embracing digitalisation as a viable means of growth, especially in the post-pandemic era.

He said internet penetration in Malaysia is at 96.8 per cent, which can offer businesses vast opportunities to reach a larger online consumer base.

"So, what this means is that whether you are operating a micro, small, medium, or even large business, the days of relying solely on traditional brick-and-mortar operations are far behind us.

"Businesses of all types, including finance, medicine, agriculture, and especially retail, have adopted innovative technology to stay ahead," Syed Mashafuddin said.

The Top ECM Award for this year was presented to ETransact Technology Sdn Bhd, who was recognised for its digital online sales of bus tickets. The IT solution company received a cash prize of RM10,000, along with a trophy and a participation certificate.

In second place was Caring E-Store Sdn Bhd, while in third was JSK Global Sdn Bhd. They were awarded cash prizes of RM8,000 and RM5,000 respectively, along with trophies and certificates.

Global recognition

Malaysian entrepreneurs are well positioned to compete in the global marketplace but face a visibility challenge which hampers their ability to showcase their full potential, Sidec chief executive officer Yong Kai Ping said.

Although many Malaysian entrepreneurs have

achieved significant sales success, to enhance their marketability they need to prioritise the digitalisation of their businesses.

"While Malaysian businesses are capable of competing globally, their lack of visibility hinders progress. By embracing digitalisation and digital solutions, they can effectively scale their businesses.

"They can also benefit greatly from the innovative digital ecosystem, including the use of AI, which can address weaknesses and make their jobs easier," he told *Selangor Journal*.

Yong further emphasised the need for Malaysian businesses to be more aggressive in promoting themselves regionally, particularly compared to neighbouring countries like Indonesia and Thailand.

"We have beautiful beaches, delicious food, and exciting activities here but they are not as well-known as destinations like Bali, Indonesia, or Thailand," he said.

Yong added that Sidec's mission is to connect local businesses with potential solutions, opportunities and ventures. Recently, it participated in the Pitch Malaysia USA Series 2023, a programme which assisted 11 promising Malaysian technology startups in investment and pitching events at key locations in the United States, including Washington DC and Silicon Valley in California.

Describing the awards and pitching event as a two-step approach to elevate local businesses to the international market, he referred to it as the 'heaven and earth' approach.

"Apart from providing guidance, we will help startups raise funds abroad. The idea is to help them establish a base and ultimately propel them forward," Yong said.

The recent US pitch series involved companies like Asia Mobility Technologies, iMotorbike, ALPS Global Holding, Virtualtech Frontier, Boxcube, Entomal, Revenue Monster Group, QMed, Accendo Technologies, Kiddocare, and Pod, among others.



Travel tickets at your fingertips

ETRANSACT Technology Sdn Bhd, a leading online bus ticket provider, is spearheading a transformative shift in bus ticket purchasing by urging consumers to ditch traditional counter transactions in favour of convenient online options.

Its managing director, Shahizam Ibrahim, said that despite being in the business for nearly 20 years, around 60 per cent of bus tickets are still purchased in person at counters, with only 40 per cent purchased online.

"However, online transactions are gaining traction, particularly among the younger generation, who value the convenience it offers. While it remains a challenge for us, we are continuously educating people about the benefits of purchasing bus tickets online and the convenience it brings.

"Yet, some individuals still prefer the counter experience for the human interaction and assurance it provides. We aim to change this perception as there are more efficient ways to purchase bus tickets," he said.

Shahizam's company operates ETicketing.my, an online bus ticket platform that processes 25,000 trips and 400,000 transactions daily, resulting in RM8 million in ticket sales on average daily.

The increasing acceptance of online bus tickets was underscored by ETransact Technology securing first place at the awards, an accolade honouring successful online-based businesses.

Outshining 601 other participants, the company was recognised for its efforts by the Selangor Information Technology and Digital Economy Corporation (Sidec).

Established in 2003, ETransact Technology ventured into online sales in 2006 when the concept was still in its infancy.

Shahizam emphasised the significant growth of online sales, which were particularly accelerated by the Covid-19 pandemic, and praised the affordability and convenience of bus travel compared to trains or planes.

He highlighted the advancements in bus station design, such as the Shah Alam Bus Station in Section 17, which resembles an airport, demonstrating the direction the industry should take.

"In the future, I envision a fully online process for ticket sales and onboarding, eliminating the need for physical tickets. This seamless process can be easily carried out through your phone," Shahizam added.

By SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM

Having faced numerous water challenges resulting from rapid urbanisation and increased demand in both domestic and industrial sectors, Selangor has become all too familiar with the complex issues surrounding clean water supply.

Acknowledging the need for a new approach, the state government has taken a significant step towards protecting its water resources and enhancing its management with the establishment of the Raw Water Security Scheme (SJAM).

This comprehensive and proactive approach aims to safeguard the state's water sources, ensuring its security and uninterrupted availability for its residents, according to Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman Izhah Hashim.

As a collaboration involving multiple entities responsible for water management in the state, including Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Air Selangor), the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (JPS), Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas), and Indah Water Konsortium Sdn Bhd (IWK), SJAM represents a committed effort to safeguard the precious resource, said Izhah.

"SJAM aims to bring together all stakeholders involved in water management, regardless of their scope, to collectively deal with water pollution and ensure the preservation of water sources."

"By consolidating expertise and resources, Selangor seeks to proactively address pollution challenges and maintain uninterrupted water supply to its residents," he said in an interview with *Selangor Journal* on June 1.

One of the primary concerns SJAM seeks to address is the potential impact of pollution on Selangor's water treatment plants (WTPs) in Sungai Semenyih, Rantau Panjang, and the three treatment plants in Sungai Selangor (commonly referred to as SSP1, SSP2, and SSP3).

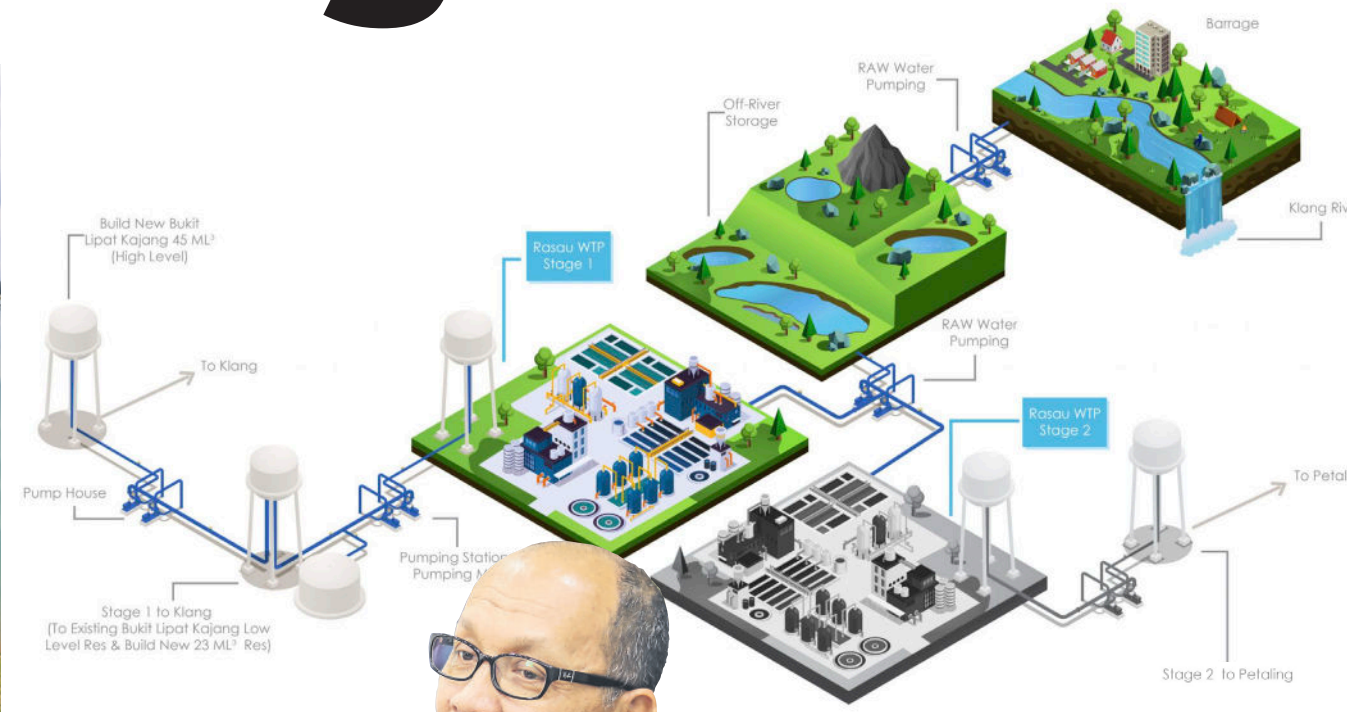
Collectively supplying approximately 67 per cent of Selangor's water, any pollution incidents affecting these crucial plants would have significant consequences, potentially impacting millions of accounts and residents, said Izhah.

"We currently have around 2.6 million accounts to service, so if two-thirds of these accounts were affected, it would be a substantial impact. We have experienced this in the past, which is why we have put a lot of thought into finding ways to clean up water pollution without it affecting the water supply."

"When pollution enters the intake, it takes approximately 12 hours to stop the pollution and another 12 hours to clean and flush the system. Then, it takes 24 hours to distribute the water to the balancing reservoirs and stabilise the supply before it can reach households."

"It is a lengthy process, unlike electricity, which can be switched on and off immediately. So, the focus is on preventing

Safeguarding water at all costs



pollution from entering the intake in the first place," he said.

One game-changing project under SJAM is utilising ponds as an alternative water source during river pollution incidents.

"For instance, the SSP1, SSP2, and SSP3 water treatment plants rely on a shared large pond known as Horas 600 as an alternative water source during river pollution incidents."

"Water sourced from the pond can sustain the supply for a minimum of five days, although our experience shows that pollution incidents rarely exceed one day. So, prompt detection of pollution is vital in minimising the duration of relying on the pond as an alternative water source," said Izhah.

For context, the Hybrid Off River Augmentation Storage (Horas) 600 reservoir can produce 300 million litres of raw water per day (MLD) and is able to supply to the people in the state and Kuala Lumpur.

Future plans

Izhah also revealed that as part of the water management policy, the future approach will no longer involve taking water directly from the river for any treatment plants.

This can be seen in the construction of the new water treatment plant in Rasau, where nine existing tin mining ponds covering 489 hectares have been identified and utilised as an Off-River Storage Facility (ORS) for a potential water source.

"That's why the new treatment plant goes through nine different ponds before reaching the intake. This gives us time to perform pretreatment or any necessary measures before the water reaches the intake," said Izhah.

With all these measures in place, Izhah

is confident that SJAM could secure the state's future water needs.

"We need to manage water holistically because it's becoming a scarce commodity. If we don't plan and manage it properly, we'll face huge problems in the future."

"The whole idea of SJAM is to maintain and manage the source of water, whether it's from rain, rivers, or other sources, to preserve the quality and quantity of raw water and ensure an uninterrupted supply."

"Additionally, we need to address wastewater issues and manage floods effectively to protect the water system," he said.

Almost there

On May 18, Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari launched the SJAM initiative, which is expected to commence operation early next year.

At the launching ceremony, the Menteri Besar said that the project involves four packages, including the pumping process, construction of pumping stations, reservoirs and river diversions, and is currently at a 51 per cent completion rate.

"The project has been planned and implemented since 2020 and is expected to be completed by October. However, there are several stages, including trial processes and simulations, so we anticipate the project to be operational early next year."

"This project is crucial for Selangor as it caters to the needs of 1.6 million accounts, involving seven million users, including the Klang Valley and Putrajaya, as well as various industrial sectors," he said when met at the launch at the Riverside Hybrid Improvement System (HORAS) 600 site in Kuala Selangor.

Amirudin stated that the project is fully funded by the state government and was



The whole idea of SJAM is to maintain and manage the source of water, whether it's from rain, rivers, or other sources, to preserve the quality and quantity of raw water and ensure an uninterrupted supply

IZHAM HASHIM
Infrastructure and Public Amenities, Agricultural Modernisation and Agro-based Industry Committee chairman

initiated after the state faced numerous water supply disruptions, affecting daily routines.

"Eight cases of plant shutdowns occurred in 2020 due to the contamination of raw water sources in Sungai Selangor and once in Sungai Semenyih, while in 2021, three cases of odour pollution occurred."

"Thank God, in 2022, with several efforts that we have initiated since 2020, although not yet perfect, the water transfer programme and reservoir construction

have reduced pollution incidents."

The Selangor Budget 2023 allocates RM332 million to ensure the success of SJAM, including RM100 million specifically designated for ensuring the operation of water treatment plants in the event of contamination.

SJAM outlines four steps to be taken as an overall solution when river pollution occurs, whether upstream or downstream. They are:

- ▶ to make amendments to the Luas Enactment 1999. The amendments were passed in the Selangor State Legislative Assembly on November 2020
- ▶ to conduct monitoring and surveillance by Luas through its Skuad Pantas
- ▶ to implement a pilot project on biological treatment or bio-remediation for the restoration of water quality in Sungai Gong
- ▶ to construct raw water pumping infrastructure at HORAS 600 to channel water into Sungai Selangor, and at Pond C into Sungai Semenyih

Lauded effort

According to the Minister of Natural

Resources, Environment and Climate Change, Selangor is among the two best states in managing non-revenue water (NRW).

Its minister, Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, said besides Selangor, another state that has shown impressive performance in NRW management is Johor.

"Selangor and Johor are the best states in managing NRW, and that is why we are providing a matching grant of RM110 million, in addition to state expenditures."

"Selangor has shown good performance, but it needs to move in line with the construction of WTPs, not just focusing solely on NRW," he said at the launch of the Rasau Water Supply Scheme in Kampung Seri Cheeding, on May 30.

Nik Nazmi also lauded the Selangor government for building the Rasau River Water Treatment Plant under the scheme to ensure the sustainability of a clean and safe supply.

"The state government has taken proactive measures as the water reserves issue in Selangor needs to be enhanced by diversifying water sources."

"If we rely on one or two sources and there is a supply disruption, it will affect many people. With this project, it can increase reserves and provide various sources of water supply in Klang," he added.

Winning the war against pollution

THE Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas) established the Luas Special Action Squad (Skuad Pantas Luas) on Dec 1, 2020, with allocations provided under the 2021 Selangor Budget to overcome the state's water pollution problem.

The squad's mission is to prevent water pollution and minimise the risks that lead to the shutting down of the state's water treatment plants (WTPs), which would cause water disruptions for consumers.

Since the formation of the squad, the number of shutdowns of WTPs or Code Red pollution incidents has dropped drastically to just two cases each in 2021, 2022 and 2023 (as of May 29) from 15 cases in 2020.

Among the squad's duties is to help other government agencies such as Pengurusan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Air Selangor), Indah Water Konsortium Sdn Bhd (IWK), the Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), the Selangor Disaster Management Unit (UPBN), the Land and District Offices, and local councils carry out 24-hour surveillance at all the state's water sources.

Pollution offenders face legal action, including stop-work orders, the seizure or demolition of their factories, compounds, and jail time.

The Special Action Squad's task is to mount static and mobile monitoring in



sensitive areas along the river basins of Sungai Langat, Sungai Selangor and Sungai Klang.

They employ high-tech Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) to carry out surveillance in difficult-to-access places.

In the event of a case of pollution, Luas will activate either Code Yellow (pollution incident detected and

CODE RED CASES

Year/Location	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (until May 29)
Sungai Langat Basin	2	5	3	2	2	1
Sungai Selangor Basin	1	6	12	0	0	1
Sungai Klang Basin	0	3	0	0	0	0
Total	3	14	15	2	2	2

CODE YELLOW CASES

Year/Location	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023 (until May 29)
Sungai Langat Basin	0	0	11	14	17	3
Sungai Selangor Basin	0	0	7	7	13	16
Sungai Klang Basin	0	0	0	0	24	2
Total	0	0	18	21	54	21

Source: Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas)

overcome immediately without shutting down a WTP) or Code Red (pollution incident of raw water resources leading to the shutdown of a WTP) under the Selangor State Water Resources Emergency Action Plan Manual.

Activated carbon, oil booms and oil pads are used at all pollution sites. Luas also has a cleaning contractor on standby for big-scale cases.



Striking a delicate balance

By SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM

SELANGOR is poised to reduce its overall carbon footprint and be at the forefront of sustainable development in green technology, says Tourism, Environment, Green Technology and Orang Asli Affairs Committee chairman Hee Loy Sian.

Recognising the urgent need to address environmental challenges, the state government has embarked on a comprehensive plan to promote renewable energy, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly practices across various sectors.

Hee mentioned that these initiatives fall under the purview of the First Selangor Plan (RS-1), which aims to decrease carbon emissions in the state's urban areas and municipalities by 40 per cent by 2035, with the ultimate goal of achieving zero carbon emissions by 2050.

However, he pointed out that the primary hurdles confronting green technology are the limited awareness of its potential and the inadequate in-

frastructure required for the sector to thrive.

"At present, the primary contributors to carbon emissions in Selangor are public transport, power plants, and industries. The current challenge lies in promoting the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) as a solution for public transportation.

"In terms of EV cars, I think local car companies might come up with attractive models under RM100,000 and give Malaysians more options. However, the availability of charging stations poses another obstacle.

"Local councils are actively involved in addressing this challenge, collaborating with the private sector to build more charging stations. The aim is to provide convenient ac-

cess for the public and encourage the transition from petrol-powered cars to electric ones.

"But the process of shifting from traditional cars to EVs is a gradual one and requires time for widespread adoption," he said in an interview with *Selangor Journal*.

Hee also highlighted additional complex challenges related to charging speed and cost at these stations, along with the task of building charging infrastructure in high-rise residential apartments.

Regarding policy, Hee anticipates the formulation of a comprehensive national policy by the Federal government to support green technology and its ecosystem.

He further opined that such a policy would aim to encourage the widespread adoption of renewable energy

sources, such as solar power, with the objective of reducing reliance on fossil fuels and promoting cleaner and more sustainable energy alternatives.

The RS-1, the state's development framework for a five-year period, features more than 200 projects aimed at benefiting the people and propelling the state towards a high-tech future.

It incorporates both private and public initiatives, including those led by the Federal government such as the light rail transit (LRT) project.

Notably, the plan also incorporates key projects initiated by the state government, such as the deepening of Sungai Klang, a vital waterway, and the Raw Water Security Scheme or SJAM.

The latter, slated for completion by year-end or 2024, aims to put an end to river pollution and ensure a sustainable supply of clean water for the Klang Valley.

Protecting the ecosystem

As the exco in charge of environmental affairs, Hee is committed to



protecting Selangor's biodiversity and is passionate about expanding the area designated as permanent forest reserves within the state.

His target is to ensure that a minimum of 33.3 per cent of the state's land is officially gazetted as permanent forest reserves. Currently, Selangor already has 32.5 per cent of gazetted forest land, reflecting the progress made in this conservation effort.

"But not all of these lands consist of forested jungles. Some are used for agricultural purposes, some are used by utility companies to build power lines or water pipes," he said.

Hee explained that by expanding the area of permanent forest reserves, Selangor can safeguard valuable ecosystems, protect biodiversity, mitigate climate change, and promote sustainable land use practices.

These forested areas play a crucial role in maintaining the ecological balance, providing habitats for wildlife, preserving water resources, and offering recreational opportunities for the public, Hee said.

However, he acknowledges that the state's rapid development poses a complex dilemma, as there is a need to strike a balance between economic growth and environmental conservation.

"Whatever the case may be, we can't reduce the number of forest reserves in the state as we need more water catchment areas, and this di-

Hee revealed that there are other cases pending. Conflict with a third, fourth, and fifth logging company awaits resolution. These financial settlements are a direct consequence of the logging moratorium, indicating the high cost incurred by the state when adhering to environmental preservation measures.

rectly impacts the water supply in the state.

"So our target is at least one-third of the state being a forest reserve."

The cost of conservation

Since 2010, Selangor has implemented the moratorium on logging, which is set to continue until 2035.

Hee said that the moratorium serves as a crucial measure to protect the state's forests and ensure their



Hee (in blue shirt) and Luas director Hasrolnizam Shaari on site at a factory in Jalan Rinching Hulu, Semenyih, to locate the cause of odour pollution at Sungai Semenyih, on June 23 last year

long-term sustainability.

"This is also part of our commitment to preserving the environment, but it remains a difficult task."

Previously, Hee revealed that Selangor incurred a significant financial loss of RM77 million in its effort to impose the 25-year moratorium.

The state faced legal challenges from logging companies during this period, resulting in financial settlements. In one case, the state had to pay RM51 million to a logging compa-

ny after losing a legal battle.

After the incident, a second company approached the state and requested RM35 million. The sum was eventually negotiated to RM26 million.

Hee revealed that there are other cases pending. Conflict with a third, fourth, and fifth logging company awaits resolution. These financial settlements are a direct consequence of the logging moratorium, indicating the high cost incurred by the state when adhering to environmental preservation measures.

Despite the financial implications, Hee emphasised that the state remains steadfast in upholding the moratorium.

The challenges and costs associated with legal disputes serve as a reminder of the importance of responsible forest management and sustainable practices in safeguarding the environment for future generations, said Hee.

Selangor has implemented a policy to ensure that any forest reserves that have been degazetted for development are replaced with land of equal or greater value.

This approach ensures that the overall area of protected land does not decrease, but rather, grows over time.

The state government is committed to championing this policy, recognising the importance of preserving natural resources and maintaining a balance between development and environmental conservation.

Menteri Besar Dato' Seri Amirudin Shari has previously emphasised that this comprehensive management approach also extends to Malay reserve land, where "the lands replaced exceed that which is taken".



Hee hikes up Bukit Ketumbar in Hulu Langat on May 29

Dirgahayu Tuanku

SALUTATIONS
AND HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS



**HIS MAJESTY
SERI PADUKA BAGINDA THE YANG DI-PERTUAN AGONG
AL-SULTAN ABDULLAH RI'AYATUDDIN AL-MUSTAFA BILLAH SHAH
IBNI ALMARHUM SULTAN HAJI AHMAD SHAH AL-MUSTA'IN BILLAH**

**D.K.P., D.K.M., D.K., D.M.N., S.S.A.P., S.I.M.P., D.K.(Terengganu)., D.K.(Johor).,
S.P.M.J., D.K.M.B.(Brunei)., D.K.(Kedah)., D.K.(Perlis)., D.K.(Perak)., D.K.(Selangor).,
Order of the State of The Republic of Turkiye.**

**on the Occasion of
His Majesty's Official Birthday**

**on
5th June 2023 (16 Zulkaedah 1444H)**

with utmost sincerity from:



The calm in the storm

By AMIN RIDZUAN ISHAK

The string of political crises that beset the country in the last four years, and the Covid-19 pandemic, have reaffirmed the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah's ability to rule with wisdom, prudence and authority.

His Majesty's address to Parliament on Feb 13 described how he was "brought to the heart of a political fiasco" after Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad's sudden resignation as the country's seventh prime minister on Feb 24, 2020.

Using a Malay proverb, Al-Sultan Abdullah said, "What was good and fine was suddenly made complicated. Even the eighth prime minister stepped down on Aug 16, 2021.

"That meant the responsibility of appointing a new prime minister fell on my shoulders."

The political chaos first unfolded when Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) decided to exit from Pakatan Harapan (Harapan). The partnership made history just two years earlier when it toppled the Barisan Nasional (BN) leadership in Putrajaya.

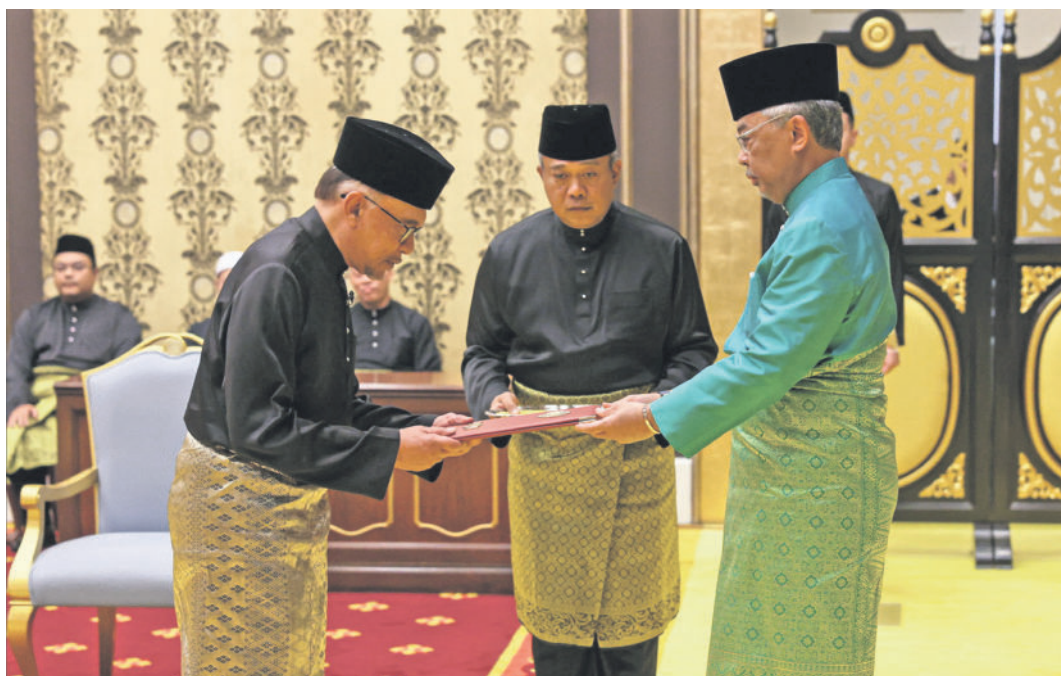
After calling a meeting on the morning of Feb 23, 2020, the top brass of Bersatu, together with a number of parliamentarians from Parti Keadilan Rakyat (Keadilan), BN dan PAS met for a dinner at Sheraton Hotel in Petaling Jaya.

Dr Mahathir, who felt he no longer commanded the support of the majority at the Dewan Rakyat, decided to call it a day. Al-Sultan Abdullah advised the elder statesman to withdraw his resignation, to no success.

He then appointed Dr Mahathir as interim prime minister before summoning all members of parliament to Istana Negara for an audience. On Feb 25 and 26, the parliamentarians took turns to personally inform His Majesty about their choice of leader.

On Feb 28, Al-Sultan Abdullah met his fellow rulers at a specially convened gathering at the palace to temporarily solve the impasse in the formation of the Federal government. It was decided that Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin be made the country's eighth prime minister, and on March 1, 2020, the Bersatu president was sworn in.

The resolution was short-lived. The Pahang parliamentarian's poor management of the country's affairs, his dismal handling of the Covid-19 pandemic, and ongoing tussles with BN proved detrimental, plunging Malaysia deeper into crisis.



Anwar takes the oath of office as the 10th prime minister before Sultan Abdullah at Istana Negara on Nov 24 last year — Picture by BERNAMA

Grave disappointment

A state of Emergency declared on Jan 11, 2021 — to supposedly hold back Covid-19 — was futile. From April to May, the virus unleashed a flood of new infections while the slow rollout of vaccines did little to quell people's alarm.

Even though the proclamation of the Emergency was made by the King, on Feb 24 His Majesty was still calling for Parliament to be convened in March. Yet, Muhyiddin turned a deaf ear.

It had to take two more calls from Al-Sultan Abdullah (on June 16 and 29), and the third time backed by the Conference of Rulers, for the prime minister to respond.

After months of pressure from the palace and the people, Muhyiddin's Perikatan Nasional (PN) government announced that Parliament would reconvene for just five days from July 26.

But caveats were made. The Special Meeting of the Third Session of the 14th Parliament would not allow debates on bills or oral question-and-answer sessions. And so, no debate was carried out on the Emergency Ordinance or the palace-backed National Recovery Plan to exit Covid-19.

Further scandal ensued when, during the session, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Seri Takiyuddin Hassan announced that Putrajaya had already revoked all Emergency Ordinances that were formulated that year on July 21, rendering all calls for the annulment of the laws irrelevant.

Al-Sultan Abdullah was gravely disappointed. On July 29, he made it known that he was displeased that the proposed

revocation of all the ordinances to be tabled and debated in parliament had not been carried out, and that it was done behind his back without his consent.

In a statement issued by the palace, His Majesty reiterated that "Article 150(2B), read together with Article 150(3) of the Federal Constitution clearly gives the power to promulgate and revoke the Emergency Ordinances to the King" and that "all quarters must abide by the rule of law".

Then, on Aug 3, 2021, a few BN parliamentarians led by Datuk Seri Zahid Hamidi withdrew their support for Muhyiddin. Muhyiddin sought for reconciliation, but when that fell apart, he handed in his resignation on Aug 16, albeit reluctantly.

In power for just 17 months, far shorter than the 22 months Harapan — a coalition he betrayed — held the reins, Muhyiddin was replaced by Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob on Aug 21.

But that was before Al-Sultan Abdullah summoned all party leaders to Istana Negara on Aug 17 to state their choice of prime minister.

Again, the Conference of Rulers convened, this time on Aug 20, 2021, to decide who would be the leader of the Federal government. The following afternoon, Ismail Sabri was named Malaysia's ninth prime minister and took his oath of office.

Ismail Sabri's stint in Putrajaya lasted only 14 months. On Oct 10, 2022, his hand was forced by internal party politics to dissolve Parliament and make way for the 15th General Election (GE15), even though the 14th Parlia-

ment session was yet to draw to a close.

Hung Parliament

While hopes were high that the GE15 on Nov 19 would put an end to political uncertainty, things would not be so for some time more.

In his own words, Al-Sultan Abdullah spoke of the responsibility he had to undertake during the five days when tensions flared.

"After GE15, for the first time in the history of our democracy, our country was faced with a hung Parliament," said His Majesty during the second session of the 15th Parliament earlier this year.

"Yet again, the onus was on me to choose and appoint the country's prime minister. Few will know the weight of that task upon my shoulders."

No coalition could reach the magic number of 112 to form a simple majority in Parliament. Harapan had 82. PN had 73.

In the end, it was BN with 30 seats who ended the stalemate by forming allies with Harapan and answering His Majesty's call for a Unity Government.

PN rejected the proposal, but Gabungan Parti Sarawak (GPS) with 23 seats, Gabungan Rakyat Sabah (GRS) (6 seats), Parti Warisan Sabah (3), two independents and one seat each from Parti Kesejahteraan Demokratik Masyarakat (PKDM) and Parti Bangsa Malaysia (PBM) made up the numbers.

Tensions eased when Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim became the 10th prime minister on Nov 24.

"I hope the 10th prime minister is the last under my reign before I return to Pahang Darul Makmur," His Majesty said.

When the time comes for Al-Sultan Abdullah to end his five-year tenure on Jan 30, 2024, it is without a doubt that he would be remembered as the King who ruled with good judgement and fairness.

"More importantly, the political crisis that plagued the nation for almost four years could have been avoided if MPs and politicians had set aside their differences and united in the interests of the people and country," he said.

"In our 66 years of independence, our diversity is what has held the nation up.

"These 66 years should have already taught us that it is our unique differences that shape our Malaysian race, a race that loves and respects one another, is tolerant, and one that is willing to live as a unified entity."



N35 KAMPUNG TUNKU

Building bridges in Kampung Tunku

self," she said in a recent interview with *Selangor Journal*.

Lim explained that her constituency, now consisting of some 53,000 people, is small to cover but is densely populated.

She further explained that despite being overwhelmingly Chinese, at over 70 per cent, Kampung Tunku has a diverse community of people.

"As a community, we are quite diverse as there are many economic migrants who stay and rent here and eventually send their families up here," she said.

The hidden poor

Being predominantly an urban seat, Kampung Tunku faces the same obstacles as that of other urban areas, like inadequate sanitation and rainwater drainage, inconsistent water supply, and traffic congestion, among others.

Lim revealed that her constituency also suffers from urban poverty, a problem made more visible by the circumstances brought upon by the Covid-19 pandemic.

"We have people who own one- or two-storey houses valued at RM1 million or more, but because either the main breadwinner has passed away, left the family or got sick, they do not have a disposable income.

"Those are the ones that are hard to identify because we depend on local residents or non-governmental organisations to locate them.

"But one of the positive impacts of

Covid-19 is that we are able to identify and create a database of some 1,000 families who are vulnerable and in need of aid.

"During the transition to the endemic phase, we also periodically call them to check if we should provide any assistance," said Lim.

Being a former Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) council member, Lim also works closely with the local council to resolve outstanding issues.

She said she hopes to see the completion of small infrastructure projects focused on public amenities like parks, drainage, and improved accessibility for disabled individuals before the dissolution of the state assembly next month. These initiatives fall under the Selangor Penyayang project.

"There are a few projects currently being worked on and a few more that we have applied for. They include parks and major drainage upgrades where usually the local council (MBPJ) may not have the budget for, but are important to us."

Another initiative that Lim was invested in was the PJ Startup Festival, which aimed to help the growth of new startups in Selangor and introduce them to Petaling Jaya's grassroots communities.

The recently-concluded festival, which kicked off in April, was focused on building resilient businesses post Covid-19.

Lim said the festival received tremendous support from both the Federal and state governments as a means to help spur the local economy.

By **SELANGOR JOURNAL TEAM**

FIRST-term Kampung Tunku assemblyman Lim Yi Wei is committed to empowering the communities in her constituency and works hard to increase their quality of life.

Steadfast in her pledge of anti-corruption, a clean government and providing better service to her constituents, Lim believes that she has achieved a good measure of her promises but wishes to do more before her term ends in June.

Her biggest achievement so far, however, is bringing a sense of identity to the constituency, by closing the gap between the rich and the poor.

"During my campaign in GE14, one of the key issues I addressed was the lack of social cohesion within the community.

One observation I made was that some residents in Taman Paramount had never ventured to Sungai Way New Village, despite its proximity of just 3 to 5 km away.

"To tackle this issue, we introduced the 'Straight Out of Kampung Tunku' concept as a branding strategy. Leveraging the historical significance of Tunku Abdul Rahman in the area, we emphasised on the need for the communities here to connect, and for bridging the gap between the affluent and the underprivileged to foster the spirit of mutual assistance in line with the spirit of Merdeka.

"In terms of branding, we have achieved success. Previously, there was confusion between Kampung Tunku and Bukit Tunku, but now people recognise Kampung Tunku as a distinct name in it-



‘Young talents have far to go’

By AFIX REDZUAN

SHAH ALAM - The Selangor State Sports Council (MSN Selangor) has congratulated its athletes who participated in the recent 32nd SEA Games 2023 in Cambodia and successfully brought home 46 medals.

Its executive director Mohamad Nizam Marjugi expressed his hope that the state athletes



will perform even better in the future and achieve the number of medals targeted.

“A total of six gold, 16 silver, and 24 bronze medals were contributed by Selangor athletes.

“We are also proud that almost all of the medal-winning athletes are young talents who can continue competing in future games.

“We hope they continue to

strive, train hard, and get selected to represent the country,” he said.

The medalists include Saiful Bahri Musmin (petanque), R. Sharmendran and C. Shahmalarani (karate), Ng Jing Xuen (golf), and six players from the field hockey squad.

Mohamad Nizam also expressed pride in Sharmendran’s achievement in successfully de-

fending the gold medal for the fourth consecutive time in the men’s 75-kilogram kumite event.

The Malaysian contingent also returned home with 45 silver and 97 bronze medals, finishing in seventh position.

However, this falls short of the 40-gold target, making it Malaysia’s worst-ever performance in the history of the biennial championship participation.

Come to Saudi, Ronaldo tells other big names

CHRISTIANO Ronaldo concedes he did not expect to finish the season empty-handed at Al Nassr but the Portuguese forward says he is happy in Saudi Arabia and hopes other big-name players will follow him to the league for the next campaign.

Ronaldo signed a two-and-a-half year contract estimated by media to be worth more than 200 million euros (RM990 million) with Al Nassr, making his debut in January.

He scored 14 goals in 16 games but it was not enough to help his side win the Saudi Pro League (SPL) title, with Al Nassr finishing second behind Al Ittihad.

The 38-year-old, who missed the final matchday due to injury, said the league was very competitive but that there were many opportunities to grow.

“We have very good teams, very good Arab players, but the infrastructure — they need to improve a little bit more. Even the referees, the VAR system, should be a little quicker,” he said in an SPL interview.

“But I’m happy here, I want to contin-

ue here, I will continue here.”

Ronaldo said he has adapted to life at the club, though there were many differences from his time in Europe where he played for elite teams such as Manchester United, Juventus and Real Madrid.

“In Europe we train more in the morning and here we train in the afternoon, or night. When you start Ramadan, we train at 10 o’clock in the night. It was so strange,” he added.

Since Ronaldo’s arrival, several other top players have been linked with a move to the Saudi league, with Lionel Messi receiving a formal offer to join Al-Hilal next season.

Ronaldo’s former teammate and Ballon d’Or winner Karim Benzema has reportedly received an offer worth more than 100 million euros (RM500 million) from Al Ittihad.

“If they are coming, big players and big names, young players, ‘old players’, they are very welcome,” said Ronaldo.

“If that happens, the league will improve a little bit. Age is not important.”

- Reuters



Ronaldo in action against Al Shabab at the KSU Stadium in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on May 23 — Picture by REUTERS

It’s time for the Selangor State Election

Your ballots COUNT



- Vote for the economy ✓
- Vote for unity ✓
- Vote for the common good ✓





Smart roads to shape the FUTURE



Selangor has adopted smart road technologies as a long-term investment for road maintenance.

Overseen by the Public Works Department (PWD) and Infrasel Sdn Bhd (Infrasel), the range of smart solutions include:

- artificial intelligence (AI)
- big data
- cloud computing

The state also launched Integrated Road Access Application (i-RAA), a system which can quickly locate damaged roads and landslips for repairs.

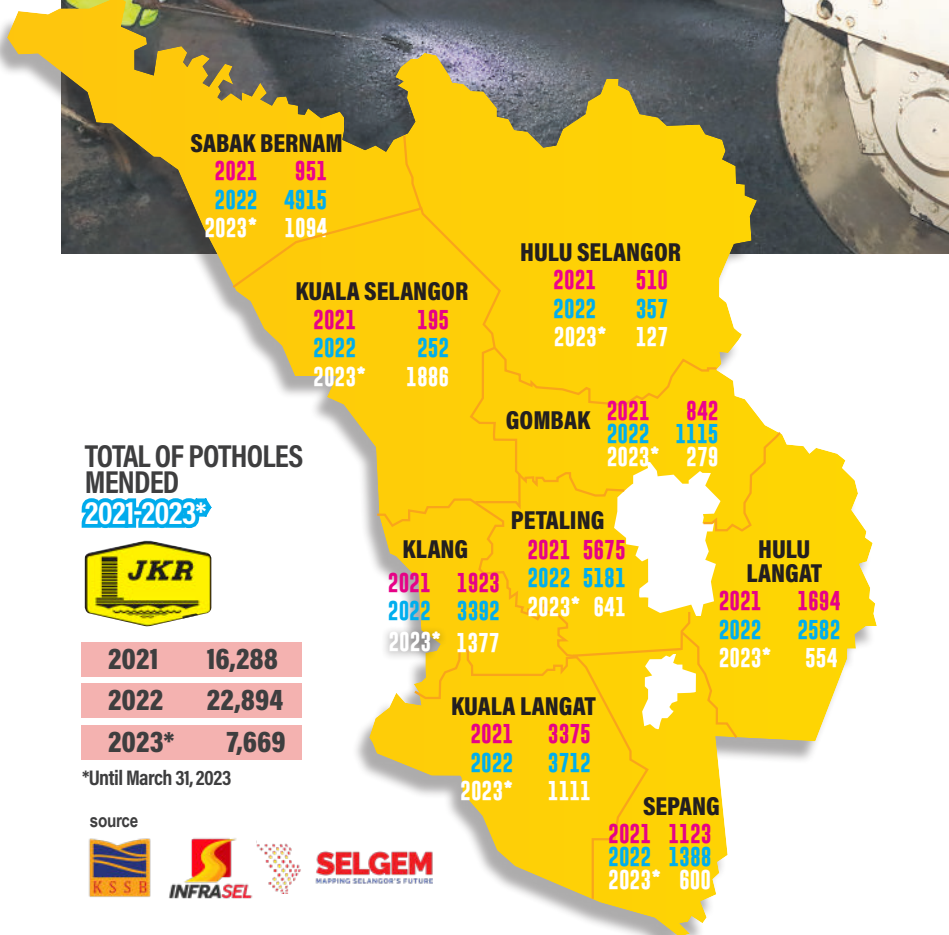
The system, managed by Selgem Sdn Bhd (Selgem):

- relies on AI technology LiDAR (light detection and ranging)
- uses 3-D laser scanning to examine the earth's surfaces

Drones, dashcams, and interactive apps are also used for real-time communication with the public.

Selgem also introduced the Road Network Defect Assessment (Ronda) to receive public complaints on damaged infrastructure or amenities.

Infrasel has been helping to manage Selangor's roads since 2021. Up until March last year, some 46,851 potholed roads in the state's nine districts were repaired.



TOTAL OF POTHOLES MENDED 2021-2023*



2021	16,288
2022	22,894
2023*	7,669

*Until March 31, 2023

