



Call to put brakes on impunity culture in transport sector
 Stop giving excuses, drag operators involved in fatal crashes to court for negligence, says road safety activist.

Report on page 5

No new taxes, please!

Report on page 4

Budget 2026 must walk tightrope between fiscal discipline and economic resilience, but fresh levies should not form part of equation, say economists.



STRATEGIC TIE-UP ... Starbucks hospitality specialists pose with Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign mascots Wira and Manja after Starbucks Malaysia and Tourism Malaysia unveiled their partnership in support of the campaign in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. – PIC COURTESY OF STARBUCKS MALAYSIA

See report on page 13

'Global Sumud Flotilla modest but significant'
 Boat convoy's real contribution is its ability to highlight obstacles to aid for Gaza and pressure Israel to open safe corridors: Academic

Report on page 2

Amanah upbeat about PH-BN pact winning 52 more seats
 Party says chances of reclaiming Malay-majority constituencies will rise significantly if multi-cornered fights are avoided in GE16.

Report on page 3

'Global Sumud Flotilla could secure better access to Gaza'

➤ Fleet highlights obstacles to aid and pressures states to open safe corridors: Expert

BY HARITH KAMAL
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The Global Sumud Flotilla (GSF) may be carrying only a modest cargo compared with large-scale United Nations (UN) convoys, but its voyage carries significant political weight that could help secure more predictable access into Gaza, an international relations expert said.

The flotilla, which is carrying food, medicine and a symbolic message of peace, includes volunteers from Europe, Asia, South Africa, Latin America and the Middle East, with 34 Malaysians forming one of the largest national contingents on board.

International Islamic University Malaysia Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Yazid Zul Kepli said GSF should be seen as a civil society initiative sailing alongside the formal aid system, not a replacement.

"The flotilla's real contribution is not measured in tonnes of cargo, but in its ability to highlight obstacles to aid and pressure states to open safe corridors."

He noted that most humanitarian relief for Gaza still moves through UN-run land routes and the Cyprus-based "Amalthea" maritime corridor, both subject to strict inspection and handover procedures.

"In contrast, GSF is a symbolic voyage. It reminds the world that access is blocked and

ordinary people are willing to risk their lives to break the siege," he said.

Mohd Yazid also highlighted Malaysia's role as a donor, advocate and facilitator in aid to Gaza.

"As a donor, Malaysia has pledged millions, including an additional US\$25 million (RM118 million) for Gaza relief at the UN General Assembly this year.

"As an advocate, the government has demanded safe passage for the flotilla and condemned threats against it.

"And as a facilitator, Malaysian NGOs have moved tonnes of aid through Jordan and continue to send medical teams," he said.

He added that Malaysia's 2023 ban on Israeli-flagged or Israel-bound ships was another example of policy being used to signal the costs of maintaining the blockade.

Mohd Yazid said to strengthen international coalitions, Malaysia should anchor its efforts within the UN system while bridging initiatives by the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the European Union (EU).

"Malaysia could help scale up the Cyprus maritime corridor, to second staff to the UN's deconfliction teams and push for guaranteed daily truck access across all Gaza regions," he said.

He also urged Malaysia to translate public solidarity into system-wide impact by directing donations through fast UN funds, such as the Occupied Palestinian Territory Humanitarian Fund and the Central Emergency Response Fund.

"Symbolic missions such as GSF matter, but they should be aligned with UN needs and eventually hand cargo over to trusted partners, such as the World Food Programme.

"That way, public pressure is translated into

real deliveries on the ground," he said.

He noted that while the UN, OIC and EU have helped keep Gaza's aid system functioning, deliveries still remain severely constrained.

"Thousands of tonnes have gone through Kerem Shalom (the crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel), yet repeated closures, looting and security restrictions mean that clinics and kitchens are still shutting down," he said.

Despite the UN's US\$4 billion (RM17 billion) appeal, only a quarter of the funds have been raised. The World Food Programme estimates that Gaza requires hundreds of truckloads daily.

"Civil society missions such as GSF cannot fill this gap in volume or money, but they could shine a light on systemic failures and nudge states to act. The real issue is not the availability of aid as supplies exist nearby.

"The problem is political will, especially the unwillingness of world leaders to act decisively while the United States continues to shield Israel," he said.

As of press time, GSF announced that its vessels were around 121 nautical miles (225km) from Gaza, nearing the point where past flotillas were intercepted or attacked.

In a statement on Telegram, organisers said unidentified vessels, some with their lights off, had approached the flotilla before moving away after participants activated security protocols.

"We continue to sail to Gaza, approaching the 120 nautical mile mark. We are all prepared for the moment of interception, whether tonight or tomorrow," said flotilla spokesperson Wael Naouar.

Reports from on board noted a sharp increase in surveillance, with reconnaissance drones flying overhead and intensified jamming of internet and radio signals.

School wins global education prize

KUALA LUMPUR: The success of Sekolah Kebangsaan (SK) Putrajaya Presint 11(1) in winning the World's Best School Prize has elevated Malaysia's presence on the global education stage, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

In a post on X, Anwar hailed the achievement as proof that school-based innovation and best practices could inspire the world.

"Congratulations and well done to the school community, the Education Ministry and all involved. This is the true spirit of Malaysia Madani in educating, inspiring and shaping the future," he said.

The award, presented by United Kingdom-based global education organisation T4 Education under the Supporting Healthy Lives category, recognises schools worldwide that drive positive change through innovative practices that could be replicated elsewhere.

SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) beat shortlisted schools from Turkiye, India, the Philippines, the United Kingdom, Vietnam, Mexico, Brazil and Thailand.

The school's winning initiative was the app HELPIE, launched in 2023 to raise awareness of and provide support for mental health among students.

Combined with a peer-to-peer classroom campaign, the project has reached over 1,000 pupils.

The announcement was made during a global livestream, also witnessed locally at a special assembly co-hosted by the Education Ministry and Yayasan Hasanah at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre.

Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek, who attended the event, highlighted the prestige of the prize and Malaysia's proud track record.

"Founded by T4 Education, the World's Best School Prizes are the world's most prestigious education awards.

"Today, SK Putrajaya Presint 11(1) was named as the winner and received US\$50,000 (RM235,000)," she said.

T4 Education, established in 2022, provides a global platform for schools to share success stories and innovations, highlighting best practices that could be adopted across education systems. - Bernama

Most breast cancer cases diagnosed late: Minister

BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PUTRAJAYA: Breast cancer continues to claim lives in Malaysia, with more than half of cases diagnosed at advanced stages, said Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad yesterday.

He revealed that as of 2024, only 857,722 women, just 10.9% of the target population, have undergone breast cancer screenings.

"More concerning is the fact that over 50% of breast cancer cases in Malaysia are detected at stages three and four, indicating late diagnosis," he said after launching the Breast Cancer Awareness Month ceremony.

Dzulkefly said the Health Ministry is targeting at least 20,000 women aged 30 and above for screenings from October to December through scheduled activities during the awareness month.

"From 2019 to 2023, over eight million women underwent breast cancer screenings, with coverage averaging around 27% annually. The incidence rate in 2022-2023 stood at 38.1 per 100,000 women, underscoring the urgency of stronger awareness and prevention efforts," he added.

The ministry has outlined several initiatives to boost early detection:

- Clinical breast examinations for women aged between 30 and 60 at the Health Ministry's headquarters, with free mammogram referrals for the B40 group.
- Community screenings at 83 locations nationwide, including 20 National Cancer Society Malaysia (NCSM) panel hospitals across 12 states.
- Mammogram screening tour using UniSZA's mobile trailer in collaboration with NCSM at selected sites.
- Comprehensive screening programmes covering colorectal, cervical, prostate and lung cancers.



Dzulkefly (left) attending the inauguration of Breast Cancer Awareness Month at the Health Ministry in Putrajaya yesterday. - ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

Dzulkefly highlighted the rising trend in cases, namely 18,206 new cases in 2007-2011, 21,634 in 2012-2016 and 29,534 in 2017-2021.

Between 2022 and 2023, 12,820 cases were reported, with the latest data still being compiled.

"This reflects delays in early detection and underscores the urgent need to strengthen public awareness so that women come forward earlier for screening," he said, adding that the initiatives aim to expand access, improve early detection and enable timely treatment.

He emphasised the moral and practical responsibility of a national healthcare system, and said: "The strength of a healthcare system is not

measured by how well we treat the strongest among us, but by how we protect and care for the weakest and most underserved.

"That is why our outreach programmes are so critical, particularly for low-income and underserved communities."

In line with the international Pink October campaign, the ministry would organise Breast Cancer Awareness Month under the theme "United for Women: Spread Awareness, Save Lives", aligned with World Cancer Day 2025-2027's theme "Unity in Diversity", highlighting that the fight against breast cancer requires unity and collaboration from all parties.

Former Armed Forces chief dies

KUALA LUMPUR: Former Armed Forces chief General Tun Dr Mohamed Hashim Mohd Ali died yesterday, aged 90.

He breathed his last at 11.52am while receiving treatment at a private hospital here.

The matter was confirmed by Armed Forces Chief General Tan Sri Mohd Nizam Jaffar.

Mohamed Hashim is the younger brother of Tun Dr Siti Hasmah, the wife of former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Mohamed Hashim was admitted to hospital last Sunday due to a hypertensive brain bleed.

According to Mohd Nizam, the remains of Mohamed Hashim would be taken to Masjid Khalid Al Walid at the Defence Ministry for funeral prayers before being laid to rest with full military honours at the Raudatul Sakinah Cemetery in Sungai Besi.

"May Allah bless his soul and place him among the righteous," he said.

Mohamed Hashim joined the Armed Forces in 1957, holding various key positions before being appointed army chief in 1985.

He later became the ninth Armed Forces chief in 1987 and retired in April 1992. - Bernama

PKR Youth seeks update over video

PETALING JAYA: Wangsa Maju PKR Youth has sought clarification on the status of a 2019 police report lodged against Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Seri Azmin Ali in relation to a widely circulated video.

Wangsa Maju youth deputy chief Ammar Othman, in a statement, asked whether the report – filed by then Selangor PKR youth information chief Mohamad Shafiq Abdul Halim – had been withdrawn after he joined Bersatu.

He said the report, lodged on June 12, 2019, at the Dang Wangi district police headquarters, was among the earliest formal complaints following the emergence of the controversial video during the Sandakan by-election. It also requested that the matter be referred to the Islamic religious authorities.

“PKR Youth is seeking clarification whether the report is still active or has been withdrawn and what this means for the investigation”

He noted that Bersatu supreme council member Datuk Wan Saiful Wan Jan had recently referred to the matter in a media statement. Ammar also urged the home minister to update the public on the investigation. – By **IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE**

Strategic PH-BN alliance key to regaining ground in GE16

■ BY **IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The alliance between Pakatan Harapan (PH) and Barisan Nasional (BN) in the coming 16th General Election (GE16) could deliver an extra 52 Malay-majority parliamentary seats, but only if both blocs avoid clashing with each other and take on Perikatan Nasional (PN) in straight fights.

Amanah deputy president Datuk Seri Dr Mujahid Yusof Rawa said this projection was based on the GE15 results, when all three major coalitions contested separately.

“A recent study suggests that, on

Recent study suggests pact could swing 52 Malay-majority seats if parties cooperate and three-cornered fights are avoided, says Amanah deputy president

paper, PH and BN could reclaim around 52 parliamentary seats lost to PN – provided seat negotiations are done strategically and multi-cornered fights are avoided,” he told *theSun*.

“These are primarily in Malay-majority constituencies.”

Mujahid added that DAP, a key component of PH, has already

reached its ceiling in terms of winnable seats.

“DAP is saturated. They’ve hit their peak. The contest in GE16 will largely be fought by Malay-based parties. That’s where the real opportunity lies to deliver a more stable government.”

He stressed that if PH and BN – particularly components PKR,

Amanah and Umno – can avoid internal clashes and present a united front, their chances of reclaiming seats from PN rise significantly.

“This isn’t just about electoral gains. It’s about political stability and forming a government that can last and govern effectively.”

Mujahid said the strategy depends on smart cooperation, respect for grassroots realities and putting national interest ahead of partisan ego.

“The people want an effective government, not endless turmoil. The Malay-majority seats lost to PN can become the battleground for that change.”

He also pointed out that under Malaysia’s first-past-the-post system (winner-take-all system), avoiding three-cornered fights is critical.

“That’s why we need a pact. Seat distribution must involve give and take – that’s what makes this coalition unique.”

Mujahid noted that unlike past pre-election coalitions, the current PH-BN alliance was born after GE15 because no single bloc could form a government on its own. The challenge now, he said, is to formalise a formula that preserves this cooperation.

The biggest test, however, lies in deciding who contests where, particularly in marginal or previously Pas-held constituencies such as Parit Buntar.

“First, there must be consensus on who defends existing seats. For those we aim to recapture from PN, we need to look at past performance – whether PH or BN placed second.”

In Gerik, Perak, where BN came in second, Mujahid said logic would suggest giving BN the chance to contest again, “but relying only on past results has its pitfalls, especially in competitive states like Perak”.

“There will have to be adjustments and swaps based on mutual agreement to maintain harmony,” he added.



Mujahid said the people want an effective government and to do that there must be smart cooperation, respect for grassroots realities and priority on national interest. – **AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THE SUN**

Rifts widen in Bersatu amid claims of manipulation, leadership betrayal

PETALING JAYA: Bersatu’s Port Dickson division chief Badrul Hisham Shaharin has warned that individuals close to party president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin are exploiting his name for personal and political gain, a situation he fears could ultimately drag the former prime minister down.

The outspoken leader, better known as Chegubard, said factionalism and power struggles over endorsements and appointments are eroding the party’s mission to serve the *rakyat*. “Some are using the president’s name to push unqualified individuals into candidacy positions.”

“I’ve spoken to the president directly and he disagrees with this practice, but silence is no longer an option.”

“These people must be stopped,” he told *theSun* when contacted.

He said bread-and-butter concerns, including the rising cost of living and land issues in Kampung Sungai Baru, are being drowned out by leaders obsessed with positions and political narratives.

The rift widened after Bersatu information chief Datuk Tun Faisal Ismail Aziz made controversial remarks on financial transactions in past elections.

Badrul claimed the comments could backfire on Muhyiddin, exposing him to scrutiny.

He referred to Tun Faisal’s claim that Muhyiddin, while serving as prime minister in 2020, had channelled RM10 million to Umno during the Sabah state election – remarks made in response to PAS

allegations that Bersatu had depended on its (PAS) funds and machinery.

“The president must now explain where the RM10 million came from.”

“If not, he risks walking into a legal trap set by his own people,” Badrul warned.

On claims by Negeri Sembilan Bersatu chief Hanifah Abu Baker, he said Muhyiddin’s visits to Negeri Sembilan had been arranged without informing local divisions.

“I believe the president was either unaware or manipulated by those around him.”

“Ultimately, it is he who faces the public’s anger when things go wrong,” Badrul said, adding that forcing candidates and programmes on divisions without consultation has damaged credibility and unity.

He also criticised Muhyiddin’s premature nomination as PN’s prime ministerial candidate during Bersatu’s annual general assembly, calling it poorly timed and divisive, especially after PAS pushed back against the announcement.

“If this continues, the people may not just turn their backs on Anwar Ibrahim’s administration, but on us as well.”

The discord comes on the heels of Supreme Council member Datuk Wan Saiful Wan Jan’s broadside against Bersatu secretary-general Datuk Seri Azmin Ali, whom he accused of wielding excessive influence and sidelining division leaders.

Wan Saiful said he would refer Azmin and Tun Faisal to the disciplinary board, alleging they had threatened leaders tied to an

alleged plot to unseat Muhyiddin.

Speculation swirled that 120 division leaders had signed statutory declarations (SD) to pressure Muhyiddin to quit.

But the claim was denied by the group in a press conference on Sept 30.

Among them, Bersatu Ipoh Timur division chief Muhammad Fadhli Ismail said he was wrongly accused.

“I am the one who stood up during the general assembly when Muhyiddin claimed there was a plan to oust him.”

“I shouted that it’s not true. The SD we signed did not call for him to step down,” he told *theSun*.

Despite the denials, the episode has left Bersatu grappling with internal mistrust and uncertainty over its leadership direction. – By **IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE**



BUDGET 2026 WISH LIST

Economists weigh benefits of **new taxes** in Budget 2026

➤ Govt urged to avoid measures that could undermine economic agility

BY T.C. KHOR
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: With Budget 2026 just days away, economists are divided on whether Malaysia should introduce new taxes to raise revenue or hold the line to protect competitiveness and growth.

Economist Dr Geoffrey Williams said Malaysia's fiscal position remains sound and urged the government to avoid measures that could undermine economic agility.

"Malaysia should aim to be a low-tax country to boost competitiveness regionally. So, no new taxes, greater efficiency and focus on competitiveness, innovation, liberal markets and economic agility is best."

He added that if new revenue is unavoidable, an e-payments tax (EPT) would be the most effective option.

A 1% levy could raise up to RM28.8 billion annually while a smaller 0.25% charge would still yield RM7.2 billion.

"Introducing an EPT would create a more resilient, broad-based, equitable taxation system with low impact on consumers and businesses," he said.

But economist T.K.S. Yugendran of Bait Al-Amanah rejected the idea outright, calling it damaging to Malaysia's digital push.

"I think it is a terrible idea. E-payments already make taxation easier and curb evasion. Tax them, and people would revert to cash, which is harder to monitor and could even fuel money laundering," he said.

Instead, he expects Putrajaya to adopt a "conservative but expansionary" stance in Budget 2026, one that balances fiscal discipline with support for growth.

"The government is likely to take a cautious approach but still expand spending where needed to sustain industries," he said, pointing to risks such as global trade tensions triggered by US tariff policies.

He added that public spending should be directed at strengthening fundamentals.

"Putrajaya should focus on food security. Our dependence on imports leaves us exposed

to price shocks. The agricultural sector must be modernised," he said.

Yugendran admitted that new taxes may eventually be unavoidable.

"Taxes always hurt the people, but in the long run we may have no choice if we want to grow the country. Still, I sympathise with the rakyat," he said.

He noted that Malaysia could no longer rely on petroleum as its fiscal backbone.

"In the 1990s and early 2000s, oil and gas made up between 30% and 40% of government revenue. Today it is less than 20%. As Malaysia grows, the government must increasingly look to private industries that drive most of our income," he said.

For Williams, the priority should not be raising taxes but creating conditions for income growth.

He argued that keeping Malaysia as a low-tax economy would strengthen its position regionally while allowing businesses and households to thrive.

Both economists agreed that Budget 2026 must walk a tightrope between fiscal discipline and economic resilience, but they remained firmly opposed on whether new taxes should form part of the equation.

Sarawak villagers bemoan exclusion from fuel subsidy

BY JOSEPH PETER
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUCHING: Villagers in Sarawak who rely on boats instead of cars say they are unfairly left out of the RM1.99 per litre RON95 subsidy, sparking growing frustration across the state.

Without Road Transport Department driving licences, which are required to qualify for the lower rate, rural residents who depend on riverboats and fishing vessels must pay the higher market price of RM2.60.

Many have travelled long distances to plead for help at service centres run by politicians and government agencies.

On Sibuan community social media pages alone, more than 3,800 comments poured in yesterday as residents vented their anger.

"It is so pitiful that we villagers cannot buy petrol at the cheaper price. We even come to Sibuan town but nobody can help us," said Juk Ngau, who travelled from Kapit.

Juk owns a speedboat but has no driving licence as riverboats do not need to be registered with the department.

Villager Julia Wan pointed out that town residents enjoy the subsidy with their MyKad and driving licence.

"Why did the politicians not look into these issues earlier?" she asked.

Sarawak Transport Minister Datuk Lee Kim Shin said the state is in talks with Putrajaya to ensure boat and fishing vessel owners also qualify for the cheaper fuel.

The Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry has despatched senior officials to Kuching to investigate the problem.

Led by its senior assistant director Noriqram Mohd Noor, the delegation has been meeting transport groups, fishermen's associations, farmers, riverboat operators and other stakeholders.

Noriqram admitted that the new pricing rollout has "grey areas" in Sarawak.

"The logistics and geographical setup in Sarawak is very different from Peninsular Malaysia. We are preparing a report to the Finance Ministry to find solutions as soon as possible," he said.

He added that thousands of coastal and riverine fishermen rely on RON95 but lack driving licences.

Cargo operators moving essentials into the interior also face shortages, with limited petrol stations and many rural outlets run by small operators with restricted fuel quotas.

Sarawak has about one million rural residents across 6,000 longhouses, many of whom own boats and chainsaws for daily farm work. Without changes, they risk losing out on the subsidy and paying RM2.60 instead of RM1.99.

Senator Abun Sui Anyit of Belaga, who first raised the alarm, said he has highlighted the matter in Parliament, urging intervention.



Yugendran stressed that public spending should be directed at strengthening fundamentals. – ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN

'Govt must prioritise raising household incomes'

PETALING JAYA: Budget 2026 must prioritise raising household incomes instead of funnelling money into special projects, said economist Dr Geoffrey Williams.

The founder of Williams Business Consultancy said Putrajaya's fiscal strategy should focus on measures that directly improve living standards, such as converting Sumbangan Asas Rahmah into a monthly scheme or expanding it into a universal basic income (UBI).

"The government should forget special projects, such as the green economy and artificial intelligence, and leave those to the market. To stimulate the economy, they need to raise incomes, which in turn would raise

spending, help SMEs, and push investment and growth."

He said Sumbangan Asas Rahmah could be redesigned for greater long-term impact.

"For an additional RM11.4 billion, it could be expanded into a UBI providing RM100 per month to 22 million people."

Williams downplayed the likelihood of sweeping tax changes in Budget 2026, noting that the recent sales and service tax (SST) hike has already taken effect while the high-value goods tax was withdrawn.

He said an e-payments tax (EPT) remains a potential option, describing it as a "low-rate levy with minimal impact".

On the topic of "sin taxes", he cautioned against further increases.

"Alcohol taxes are already very high and tobacco taxes, although sometimes justified for health reasons, do not generate much revenue and encourage smuggling."

He questioned the fiscal benefits of petrol subsidy rationalisation, saying it is not well targeted to protect vulnerable groups.

"The saving is projected to be as little as RM2.5 billion, compared with the RM8 billion previously announced. It is also not targeted at protecting vulnerable groups because it is available to everyone for purchases under 300 litres per month," he said.

Nonetheless, he estimated that total savings from subsidy rationalisation across petrol, electricity and other sectors could reach RM17 billion, with another RM10 billion expected from higher SST collections.

"These savings could be redirected to health, education and social protection. But there are signs that this money may just go into operational expenditure," he warned.

Williams stressed that Malaysia's fiscal position is sound and the government's next step must be to lift household incomes.

"Anything else is a distraction from the core aim of improving the standard of living for the rakyat," he said. – BY T.C. KHOR

'No compromise for transport operators in road crashes'

➤ Court action crucial to address systemic corporate negligence, say experts

■ BY QIRANA NABILLA
MOHD RASHIDI
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Thirty-seven lives lost in Genting Highlands. Fifteen students killed in Gerik. A baby crushed at Kajang. In all these road tragedies, not one transport company has been prosecuted for negligence.

Road safety and sustainable transport activist Shahrim Tamrin said Malaysia's long list of deadly crashes exposes a culture of impunity, in which operators and directors escape accountability while grieving families are left with no justice.

"It is time for the authorities to stand firm and adopt zero compromise against operators or transport companies by hauling them to court each time a commercial vehicle crash records death and injury involving other road users."

The call comes after two recent incidents: a one-year-old boy died when a lorry ploughed into vehicles at the Kajang Toll Plaza in Selangor and a driver perished when a trailer

rammed into six vehicles.

Shahrim said despite safety codes such as iCOP SHE introduced by the former Land Public Transport Commission and now under the Road Transport Department (RTD), no company or director has ever been charged in court for negligence, even in cases involving mass fatalities.

"I have also sought court documents and requested confirmation from the authorities and the answer was shocking.

"For the record, until this media statement was released, no rail and road transport companies have been (brought) to court during the transport commission era."

Among the deadliest crashes on record are the 2013 Genting Highlands bus tragedy, which claimed 37 lives and the Gerik tour bus accident four months ago that killed 15 Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris students.

"To the best of my knowledge, according to the Land Public Transport Act 2010 and in the permit regulations along with the iCOP SHE safety code, transport companies can be subjected to court action for

negligence or failure to comply with safety guidelines.

"However, I was informed by several high-ranking government officials that the prosecution of companies is complex due to the legal complications including lack of clear findings and the absence of a specific charge."

Shahrim urged the Transport Ministry and the Cabinet-level Road Congestion and Safety Committee to show political will by ending the excuses and prosecuting negligent operators.

"Now is the right time for the authorities to (bring) negligent transport operators to court. I believe the public is jaded by the repeated formation of committees while the deaths and injuries of road users continue to escalate due to the lack of firm action by the government."

Meanwhile, Road and Transportation Safety Association president Md Hairolazaman Muhamed Nor said repeated fatal crashes involving heavy vehicles point to systemic failures in enforcement and regulation.

He said enforcement remains reactive instead of preventive, adding that more than 60% of commercial vehicle operators recently failed safety audits due to malfunctioning GPS monitoring systems and poor compliance with iCOP.

"Fragmented oversight between agencies such as the RTD and the Land Public Transport Agency, coupled with weak legal mechanisms, has allowed systemic safety lapses to persist despite routine inspection requirements."

He said there is growing consensus among legal experts, policymakers and civil society that Malaysia needs corporate manslaughter laws to hold company directors accountable for systemic negligence.

"Existing laws mainly target individual drivers, while operators and directors often escape liability despite issues such as poor maintenance, excessive working hours and lax safety standards. The absence of a corporate manslaughter provision leaves a gap in which corporate negligence is unpunished.

"Recent high-profile fatal crashes have sparked renewed calls for the introduction of a Corporate Manslaughter Act from influential figures, to ensure that the entire organisation, including board members and CEOs, could be prosecuted for gross negligence leading to death."

He added that accountability must shift from individual drivers to company boardrooms through such an Act, to compel systemic safety reforms and deter corporate negligence.

Court orders RM169m forfeited to government

KUALA LUMPUR: The Sessions Court yesterday ordered the forfeiture of cash exceeding RM169 million belonging to former prime minister Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob, handing the money over to the government.

Judge Suzana Hussin ruled that the funds be surrendered after Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) DPP Mahadi Abdul Jumaat confirmed no third parties had come forward to claim an interest.

"The respondents (Ismail Sabri and his former political secretary Datuk Mohammad Anuar Mohd Yunus) did not file any objection to this application, a fact recorded on Sept 8.

"The Court finds no claims have been made by any third parties. Therefore, the Court allows the applicant's request for the listed assets to be forfeited to the government of Malaysia under Section 41(1) of the MACC Act 2009," Suzana said.

The court had earlier issued a third-party notification through the Federal Government Gazette, giving any interested parties the chance to assert claims. None were received.

Mahadi told the court that during the Sept 8 mention, it was officially recorded that both respondents would not challenge the forfeiture.

Their counsel, K. Ragnath and Joshua Tay, were present yesterday.

On Aug 28, the duo had written to the Court via their lawyers stating they would not contest the application.

The MACC had, on July 7, sought to forfeit more than RM169 million in cash seized from Mohammad Anuar, which it said belonged to Ismail Sabri.

The sum comprised multiple currencies: RM14.77 million, SG\$6.13 million, US\$1.46 million, CHF3 million (Swiss francs), €12.16 million, ¥363 million, £50,250, NZ\$44,600, AED34.75 million (Emirati dirham) and AU\$352,850.

The forfeiture was pursued under Section 41(1) of the MACC Act 2009 after investigators determined the money was the property of Ismail Sabri and linked to an offence under Section 36(2) of the Act.

Ismail Sabri was summoned several times to provide statements regarding his asset declarations.

In February, MACC seized RM170 million in cash in various currencies along with 16kg of gold bullion worth about RM7 million.

The seizures were part of a corruption and money laundering probe into the Bera MP.

The raids were carried out at a residence and an office, believed to have been used as a "safe house", during investigations into four of his senior aides who had been detained earlier. — Bernama

Call for firmer rules to govern cyberspace

■ BY FAIZ RUZMAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: Deputy Defence Minister Adly Zahari has urged the world to establish binding rules for cyberspace, adding that attacks on civilians and critical infrastructure must be outlawed as nations face increasingly borderless and destructive digital threats.

"Artificial intelligence (AI) is now as critical as electricity or water. If AI fails, is hacked or hijacked, the effects could impact militaries, economies and societies," he said during his keynote speech at the Cyber Siaga 2025 event yesterday.

He added that AI could be poisoned with false data or manipulated to spread disinformation, raising the risk of leaders making decisions based on compromised systems.

"Machines may accelerate action, but leaders must weigh the consequences in human terms; sovereignty, lives and stability."

Adly also said Asean could serve as a bridge between regional priorities and global initiatives, ensuring developing nations are not sidelined in shaping cyber norms.

His call was reinforced by experts who warned that Malaysia's reliance on a defensive cyber posture could leave the nation exposed as adversaries prepare to weaponise digital networks in future conflicts.

Crest Asia Council Malaysia chairman B.K. Soon said Malaysia has no intention of launching offensive



Army personnel examine a bomber drone developed by a local defence tech company during the event. — ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

cyber operations, choosing only to block intrusions.

"At this point, Malaysia (opts for) defence, not active defence.

"We do not have the intention or the desire to go into other people's systems."

He said such restraint could prove costly, as Asean countries must contend with "big boy" powers that dominate the cyber battlefield.

"When we introduce any military asset, the payloads that the bigger country sends us are always different. And the same could happen in cyber

warfare and cyber weapons.

"They would not sell us the best tools or the best protection to defend ourselves," Soon said, urging Asean to take greater responsibility for its digital security.

Australian Defence Force cyber commander Maj-Gen Robert Watson said adversaries are no longer content with low-level hacking or data theft, warning of a shift towards "pre-positioning", a phenomenon in which hostiles embed themselves in networks ahead of conflict.

"There is only one reason why you

would pre-position, which is to bring down systems during conflict at a time and place of your choosing."

Watson described this as a "dangerous new phase" of cyber conflict, one that may already be in motion despite the absence of open state-on-state cyber warfare.

"At the moment, cyber has not been used in a state-on-state conflict, so we are in the very early days of thinking about the strategy and employment of cyber as a true 'warfighting' domain.

"But we must prepare for it, because it would be a key part of any future conflict."

Meanwhile, Japan Institute for Cyberspace Studies special adviser Harris Hursti flagged the fragility of AI, warning that it could be manipulated with false data or malicious "magic tokens" to trigger harmful behaviours.

"AI could be turned against us. We are carrying time bombs in our models and we have very little we could do to defuse them," he said, adding that flaws could persist across generations of models, leaving governments, businesses and individuals exposed to manipulation at scale.

Cyber Siaga 2025, held alongside the Cyber and Digital Services, Defence and Security Asia Exhibition and Conference at the Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre, brought together senior defence leaders, industry specialists and regional partners to confront the escalating threats of the digital era.

BMW fans **redefine** car modding scene

► Enthusiasts gather to flaunt modified vehicles, compete and bond over shared passion

BY FAIZ RUZMAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PUTRAJAYA: To outsiders, car modification often carries the stigma of being a costly and frivolous pursuit.

But for those within the scene, it is a craft driven by passion, creativity and personal expression, carefully balanced against budget.

That spirit was on display at the Mega Gathering 2.0 E9X Bimmers Malaysia event in Presint 4, Putrajaya on Sept 27, in which BMW E90 series enthusiasts showcased their customised vehicles, competed across 19 categories and bonded over a shared love for the marque.

For Azwan Syafiq, 33, from Johor Bahru, the modifications on his 2007 BMW E92 are the result of patience and do-it-yourself effort.

Competing in the "Base Lower" category, his car featured rim fittings, spoilers and custom lights, much of which he installed himself.

He acknowledged the perception that car modification could be a financial burden, but added that the reality depends on personal choices.

"People say hobbies such as this are expensive but it is just like motorbikes. It depends on your pocket. Some go for branded parts, others are fine with (cheaper) parts as long as it looks right.

"For me, as long as you do it yourself and it looks good, that is enough. Hobbies should fit your budget, not break you," said the property agent, who invested more than RM5,000 in adjustable suspension but kept his engine standard to control costs.

For fellow Johorean, Mustafa, 39, the joy lies in interiors.

His vehicle, competing in the "Best Interior" category, was fitted with a VIP-style steering wheel, a digital meter, curtains and even a fragrance diffuser.

The modifications cost him about RM15,000, with the steering wheel



The event drew more than 200 cars, with organisational costs of about RM25,000 covered by sponsors and participant fees. — PIC COURTESY OF AMIR FARIZAT SAYUTI

and digital meter alone accounting for RM3,000.

However, he dismissed the perception that BMWs are expensive to maintain.

"People think BMWs are costly to run, but there are many durable, affordable parts from Thailand.

"Even (other vehicle brands) could have certain parts that cost thousands," he said, adding that comfort and driving pleasure are his main motivations rather than extravagance.

For 35-year-old workshop owner Muhammad Aaron Arshad from Seremban, modification is both a business and passion.

Competing in the "Best Carbon Fibre" category, he showcased bonnets, lips and panels from his own company, AZ Carbontech.

He has spent between RM60,000 and RM70,000 on his car over four years, with nearly half that amount dedicated to carbon fibre components.

"I did not join to win, but for the fun and experience. If you focus too much on winning, you would only end up dissatisfied. Young enthusiasts must learn to balance passion with responsibility.

"Do not just follow others blindly. Modify within your means. If your finances are tight, do not force it; there are more important things in life."

For organiser Abdul Muda, better known as "Mud CentRoy", the event was about more than just cars.

He said obtaining approval to host the gathering in Putrajaya was a drawn-out process with clearance granted only days before the event.

"It was stressful at times but we kept pushing ahead. I did not want the community to lose out. In the end, I'm grateful it all came together."

His perseverance paid off. The event drew 220 registered cars and another 50 unregistered vehicles, with organisational costs of about RM25,000 covered by sponsors

and participant fees.

Abdul's own company, CentRoy Bimmers, contributed RM7,000.

"Seeing the cars and the community come together makes it worth it. My hope is for E9X to become one of the strongest and most recognised BMW groups in Malaysia."

Held from 5pm to 11pm, the gathering featured showcases, vendor stalls, competitions in different categories and a series of lucky draws.

Organisers said the event aimed to foster camaraderie, support local businesses, position Putrajaya as an automotive hub and counter stereotypes about BMW ownership.

As the event drew to a close, organisers said the strong turnout underscored both the growing popularity of the E9X community and the wider appeal of car modification in Malaysia, in which enthusiasts continue to positively challenge perceptions of the hobby.



Azwan said car modification could be a financial burden, but added that the reality depends on personal choices. — ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THE SUN

EDUCATION

FOCUS 2025

Education matters remain an important component of Malaysian society. Today the landscape is fast paced with new exciting developments in technology such as AI, coding, virtual reality, and cybersecurity, leading the way for changes in curriculum development. To showcase the latest and most updated content, we invite you join us in 2025, and be part of our Education Focus!



'Myanmar crisis threatens regional stability'

HAMILTON: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has warned that the crisis in Myanmar threatens the stability of the region.

"This crisis, which has deepened since the 2021 military takeover, tramples on the human rights, dignity and safety of millions and threatens regional stability," Guterres said in remarks delivered on his behalf by Chef de Cabinet Courtenay Rattray at the UN High-Level Conference on the Situation of Human Rights of Rohingya and Other Minorities in Myanmar.

He said that "it is not enough to take stock of the status quo. We must also foster solidarity and forge solutions", while noting that minorities in Myanmar "have endured decades of exclusion, abuse and violence".

Guterres said Rohingyas "have been stripped of their right to citizenship", forcing more than a million to seek refuge in Bangladesh.

"In the past 18 months, 150,000 Rohingyas have fled to Bangladesh."

Guterres said aid cuts have squeezed access to healthcare and stifled opportunities for learning and livelihoods. Food assistance risks running out at the end of next month.

"We must find a sustainable political solution that will shape a peaceful and inclusive future for all of Myanmar." He called for action in three key areas: respect for humanitarian and human rights law, unhindered humanitarian access, and renewed humanitarian and development investment. – Bernama

China coast guard raises flag near atoll

BEIJING: China's coast guard held a National Day flag-raising ceremony on a ship in the waters off the disputed Scarborough Shoal, vowing to "stand guard" over the atoll.

China and Philippines claim the triangular feature in the busy waterway of the South China Sea, but it is effectively under Beijing's control. In September, China infuriated Manila with a plan to set up a nature reserve there.

Coast guard officers standing in formation on the rear deck of the patrol vessel *Dahao (3304)* saluted as the Chinese flag was raised, a video showed in a coast guard posting yesterday.

"We stand guard over these blue waters, assuring the nation of our unwavering commitment," the video subtitles read.

The Philippine coast guard did not immediately respond to a Reuters request for comment.

In 2012 China seized control of the shoal and has since kept a deployment of coast guard and fishing trawlers there.

A ruling by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in 2016 went in favour of Manila but sovereignty over the shoal was not within the scope of the decision. – Reuters

Powerful quake strikes Cebu

➤ Dozens killed, hospitals overwhelmed

CEBU: The death toll from a 6.9-magnitude earthquake that hit the central Philippines rose to 69 yesterday, a disaster official said, as authorities mounted a rescue effort to find survivors after one of the country's strongest quakes in a decade.

The shallow quake struck late on Tuesday off the coast of the island of Cebu, cutting power and damaging buildings. It was not immediately clear how many people were missing.

The death toll was 69 as of late morning yesterday said Jane Abapo of the regional Civil Defence office, citing data from the provincial disaster agency.

The national disaster agency earlier said the toll could be as high as 60, with 150 reported injured.

The hospital in Bogu City near the epicentre of the quake was "overwhelmed", said Civil Defence

official Raffy Alejandro.

The Philippine coast guard deployed a vessel carrying dozens of doctors, nurses and other medical personnel bound for Bogu, while President Ferdinand Marcos Jr assured survivors of swift assistance, with Cabinet secretaries on the ground directing relief operations.

"We are assessing the damage, we are assessing the needs," Marcos said after distributing aid in Masbate, an island recovering from the impact of Super typhoon *Ragasa* last week.

Mariano Martinez, the mayor of San Remigio municipality close to Bogu, said there were 11 casualties in the area, with victims as young as 12 and the death toll expected to climb.

Earthquake monitoring agencies put the quake's depth at around 10km and recorded aftershocks, the strongest having a magnitude of 6. There was no tsunami threat.



Injured Filipinos receive treatment at an emergency station outside a provincial hospital in Bogu City. – AFP/PPIC

The Philippines lies in the Pacific "Ring of Fire", where volcanic activity and earthquakes are common.

The country had two major earthquakes in January, with no casualties reported.

In 2023, a 6.7 magnitude offshore earthquake killed eight people.

San Remigio Vice-Mayor Alfie Reyes said among those killed were people who were playing basketball in a sports complex when it partially collapsed.

She appealed for food and water for evacuees, as well as heavy equipment to aid search and rescue workers.

"It is raining heavily and there is no electricity so we really need help, especially in the northern part because there's a scarcity of water after supply lines were damaged by the earthquake," Reyes said.

Local media posted videos of people rushing out of their homes as the ground shook and buildings collapsed, including a church that was more than 100 years old.

Cebu, one of the Philippines' most popular tourist destinations, is home to 3.4 million people.

It was not immediately clear the extent of the damage in other areas of the island.

The Mactan-Cebu International Airport, the country's second busiest gateway, remained operational. – Reuters



Rescuers search for three people reported missing under the rubble of a collapsed building in Bogu City. – AFP/PPIC

91 people likely trapped under collapsed Java school

SIDOARJO: Around 91 people are believed to be still trapped under the ruins of a collapsed school in Java, authorities said as rescue teams searched for survivors.

The multi-storey boarding school in the town of Sidoarjo suddenly gave way on Monday as students were gathered for afternoon prayers.

"Based on student attendance data, 91 people are suspected to be buried under building materials," National Disaster and Mitigation Agency spokesperson Abdul Muhari said in a statement late Tuesday.

It earlier said three people died and 38 people were still unaccounted for.

Officials said yesterday they were still trying to confirm the number of missing when asked at a news conference in Sidoarjo.

Rescue teams were focusing on supplying life support to survivors trapped under the rubble, said Emi Freezer, the National Search and Rescue Agency's head of operations.

They were concentrating on seven areas where signs of life had been detected, he said.

"The main structure has totally collapsed. We prioritised saving victims who were still responsive."

Dozens of parents waited yesterday near the collapsed building. Qoyyimah, a 42-year-old mother,

was in tears outside the flattened school, desperate for news of her 15-year-old son.

"I first heard about the collapse from relatives who live here. I was shocked," said the woman from Madura.

Being away, "I couldn't do anything," she said.

"I couldn't take it anymore, I couldn't just wait for updates, I was restless and I had to see it for myself," said Qoyyimah, who arrived on Tuesday, a day after the building collapsed.

"I'm really worried."

With rescue teams on the ground, an earthquake that struck overnight

off the coast nearby brought their work to a brief halt.

Local media reports quoted a school official as saying construction work had been going on for the past nine months.

The building collapsed after its foundation pillars failed to support the weight of new construction on the fourth floor of the school, according to Muhari.

Lax construction standards have raised concerns about building safety in Indonesia, where it is common to leave structures, particularly houses, partially completed, allowing owners to add extra floors later when their budgets permit. – AFP

Vietnam estimates Typhoon Bualoi damage at US\$303m

HANOI: Vietnam said Typhoon *Bualoi* caused an estimated US\$303 million (RM1.3 billion) of property damage this week, saying in a preliminary assessment yesterday that nearly 170,000 houses were damaged or inundated by flooding.

Bualoi made landfall on Monday in northern central Vietnam, bringing

huge sea swells, strong winds and heavy rains that have killed at least 29 people and left 22 others missing, according to the disaster management agency report.

The typhoon severely damaged roads, schools, and offices, and caused power grid failures that left tens of thousands of families without

electricity, the report said. More than 34,000ha of rice and other crops were destroyed, it said.

The report did not mention any major damage to industrial properties.

Vietnam is a regional manufacturing hub, and large factories in or near the typhoon's path

included some owned by Foxconn, Formosa Plastics, Luxshare and Vinfast.

The typhoon triggered floods across Vietnam's north, and disrupted flights and train services with the capital, Hanoi, where schools were closed and many homes inundated. – Reuters



Stars drag Google into fight for 'personality rights'

Indian actors argue AI videos cause harm

NEW DELHI: Bollywood stars are asking judges to protect their voice and persona.

In a high-profile case, Abhishek Bachchan and his wife Aishwarya Rai have asked a judge to remove and prohibit creation of AI videos infringing their intellectual property rights.

They also want Google ordered to have safeguards to ensure such YouTube videos do not train other AI platforms, legal papers reviewed by Reuters show.

A handful of celebrities have begun asserting their "personality rights" in courts over the last few years, as India has no explicit protection for those like in many US states.

But the Bachchans' lawsuits are about the interplay of personality rights and the risk that misleading or deepfake YouTube videos could train other AI models.

The actors argue that YouTube's content and third-party training policy is worrying as it lets users consent to sharing of a video they created to train rival AI models, risking further proliferation of misleading content, according to near-identical filings from Abhishek and Aishwarya dated Sept 6, which are not public.

"Such content being used to train AI models has the potential to multiply the instances of use of any infringing content that is first being uploaded on YouTube being viewed by the public, and then also being used to train," the filings said.

Representatives for the Bachchans and

Google spokespersons did not respond to Reuters' queries.

The Delhi High Court last month asked Google's lawyer to submit written responses before the next hearing on Jan 15.

Indian courts have started to back Bollywood stars upset about generative AI content damaging their reputation. In 2023, a Delhi court restrained the misuse of Anil Kapoor's image, voice and even a catchphrase he often used.

Reuters was the first to report details of the Bachchans' specific challenge against Google, which was contained in court filings spanning 1,500 pages where they mostly target little-known sellers for unauthorised physical merchandise like posters, coffee mugs and stickers with their photos and even fake autographed pictures.

They are also seeking US\$450,000 (RM1.9 million) in damages against Google and others, and a permanent injunction against such exploitation.

The lawsuits contain hundreds of links and screenshots of what they allege are YouTube videos showing "egregious", "sexually explicit" or "fictitious" AI content.

The judge in early September ordered 518 website links and posts specifically listed by the actors to be taken down, saying they caused financial harm to the couple and harmed their dignity and goodwill.

Reuters, however, found videos similar to the examples of infringing videos cited in Abhishek's papers on YouTube.

YouTube's data-sharing policy states creators can opt in to share their videos for training models of other AI platforms.



Aishwarya and Abhishek have asked a judge to remove and prohibit creation of AI videos infringing intellectual property rights. – AFPIC

YouTube adds: "We can't control what a third-party company does if users share videos for such training."

The Bachchans argue that if AI platforms are trained on biased content that portrays them in a negative manner and infringes their intellectual property rights, then AI models "are likely to learn all such untrue" information, leading to its further spread.

YouTube in May disclosed that it had paid more than US\$2.4 billion to Indian creators in the last three years.

The actors alleged that creators infringing their personality rights can make money when videos become popular. – Reuters

New China visa to lure talent

BEIJING: China kicked off yesterday a new visa programme aimed at attracting foreign talent in science and technology, part of efforts to position itself as a world leader in those sectors.

China's new K visa significantly simplifies the immigration process for those eligible, according to state media.

The K visa does not require a domestic employer or entity to issue an invitation to the applicant.

"K visas will offer more convenience to holders in terms of number of permitted entries, validity period and duration of stay," Xinhua news agency reported in August.

The official description for those able to apply is "young foreign scientific and technological talents", but the exact age, educational background and work experience requirements needed are as yet unclear.

Xinhua said visa-holders will be able to "engage in exchanges in fields such as education, culture, and science and technology, as well as relevant entrepreneurial and business activities".

The US tech industry has been rattled by unexpected changes made by the Trump administration to the H-1B visa procedure.

H-1Bs allow companies to sponsor foreign workers with specialised skills – such as scientists, engineers and computer programmers – to work in the United States for three years, with a possible extension to six.

Such visas are widely used by the tech industry, but the new H-1B visa policy now requires a one-time US\$100,000 (RM421,256) fee.

Indian nationals account for nearly three-quarters of the permits allotted via a lottery system each year.

A *People's Daily* article on Tuesday pushed back at what it called "rumours" about the new visa creating "immigration problems" in China.

"The so-called 'immigration crisis' will not materialise, we should have cultural confidence," it said. – AFP

Giant sinkhole haunts Chilean town folk

TIERRA AMARILLA: Residents in the mining town of Tierra Amarilla in the Chilean desert are hopeful that a new court ruling will allay their fears about a giant sinkhole that opened near their homes more than three years ago.

A Chilean environmental court this month ordered Minera Ojos del Salado, owned by Canada's Lundin Mining, to repair environmental damage related to activity at its Alcaparrosa copper mine, which is thought to have triggered the sinkhole in 2022.

The ruling calls on the company to protect the region's water supply and fill the sinkhole.

The cylindrical crater originally measured 64m deep and 32m wide at the surface.

That has provided a small measure of relief to those in arid Tierra Amarilla in Chile's central Atacama region, who fear that without remedial works the gaping hole could swallow up more land.

"Ever since the sinkhole occurred ... we've lived in fear," said Rudy Alfaro, whose home is 800m from the site. A health centre and preschool are nearby.

"We were afraid it would get bigger."

The sinkhole expelled clouds of dust in a recent earthquake, provoking more anxiety, she said.

The court upheld a shutdown of the small Alcaparrosa mine ordered by Chile's environmental regulator in January, and confirmed "irreversible" damage to an aquifer, which drained water into the mine and weakened the surrounding rock.

"This is detrimental to an area that is already hydrologically stressed," said regional water director Rodrigo Saez. – Reuters



The 64m deep and 32m wide sinkhole in Tierra Amarilla, Chile. – REUTERS/PIC

FBI head gave NZ officials illegal arms

SYDNEY: FBI director Kash Patel gifted New Zealand officials illegal firearms during his visit to the country earlier this year, authorities said yesterday.

Patel visited New Zealand in July to open a permanent intelligence office and met senior government ministers, intelligence bosses and law enforcement officials.

New Zealand Police Commissioner Richard Chambers said yesterday he received a "coin display stand featuring an inoperable plastic 3D-printed replica pistol" from Patel.

"The advice of the Firearms Safety Authority was sought the following day and the gifts were collected from recipients," Chambers said.

"While inoperable in the form they were gifted, a subsequent analysis by the Firearms Safety Authority and Police Armoury determined that modifications could have made them operable."

The other firearms were gifted in display stands to spy agency bosses Andrew Hampton and Andrew Clark.

Chambers said in compliance with local firearms laws, the replica pistols were destroyed.

"To ensure compliance with New Zealand firearms laws, the gifts were handed to New Zealand Police the following day," a joint statement from the intelligence services said.

"Following assessment by police firearms specialists, the gifts were retained by New Zealand Police."

A US embassy Wellington spokesperson said the gift was a coin display stand that included a plastic, inert, non-functional replica of a firearm as a design element. – AFP

Israel ramps up offensive

➤ Evacuees barred from returning north

CAIRO: Hamas's review of President Donald Trump's Gaza plan stretched into a third day yesterday, a source close to the group said, as other Palestinian factions rejected the proposal and as Israel again bombed Gaza City.

Trump on Tuesday gave Hamas "three or four days" to respond to the plan he outlined this week with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who has backed the proposal to end Israel's almost two-year-old war with the group.

"Accepting the plan is a disaster, rejecting it is another, there are only bitter choices here, but the plan is a Netanyahu plan articulated by Trump," said a Palestinian official, familiar with Hamas's deliberations with other factions.

"Hamas is keen to end the war and end the genocide and it will respond in the way that serves the higher interests of the Palestinian people," he said, without elaborating.

The Israeli military issued new orders for people to leave for the south and said it would no longer allow those to return to the north, as Gaza City came under heavy bombing.

Israeli planes and tanks pounded residential neighbourhoods throughout the night, residents in Gaza City said. Local health authorities said that at least 17 people across Gaza had been killed by the military yesterday, most of them in Gaza City.

A strike on the old city in northwestern Gaza City killed seven people, while six people sheltering in a school in another part of the city were killed in a separate strike, medics said.

In a new development, the Israeli military said that starting yesterday it would no longer allow

people to use a coastal road to move from the south to communities in the north.

It would remain open for those fleeing south, it said.

In recent weeks, few people have moved from the south to the north as the military has intensified its siege on Gaza City. However, today's decision will put pressure on those who are yet to leave Gaza City and also prevent hundreds of

thousands of residents who have fled south from returning to their homes, likely deepening fears in Gaza of permanent displacement.

It would also stop the transfer by local merchants of goods from south to the north, which could worsen food shortages in Gaza City.

The military had taken similar measures in the early months of the war, separating north and south, before later easing those measures in January during a temporary ceasefire.

Hamas is yet to publicly comment on Trump's plan, which

demands that the group release the remaining hostages, surrender its weapons and have no future role in running Gaza.

The plan sees Israel making few concessions in the near-term and does not lay out a clear path to a Palestinian state, one of the key demands of not only Hamas but the Arab and Muslim world.

The plan states that Israel would eventually withdraw from Gaza but does not define a time frame. Hamas has long demanded that Israel must fully withdraw from Gaza for the war to end. – Reuters



Smoke rises during an Israeli attack as displaced Palestinians fleeing northern Gaza move southwards. – REUTERSPIC

Harvard, Washington settle for US\$500m

WASHINGTON: President Donald Trump said on Tuesday that his administration had reached a deal with Harvard University after months of negotiations and that the Ivy League school will pay US\$500 million (RM2.1 billion).

"Linda is finishing up the final details," Trump said at an event in the Oval Office, referring to Education Secretary Linda McMahon.

"And they'll be paying about

US\$500 million and they'll be operating trade schools. They're going to be teaching people how to do AI and lots of other things, engines, lots of things."

Harvard had no immediate comment on Trump's remarks.

The Trump administration has threatened schools, universities and colleges with the withholding of federal funds over issues including pro-Palestinian protests, climate

initiatives, transgender policies, and diversity, equity and inclusion practices.

Rights advocates have raised free speech, privacy and academic freedom concerns over the administration's probes.

Trump has said that universities such as Harvard allowed displays of antisemitism during protests.

Protesters, including some Jewish groups, say the government

wrongly equates criticism of Israel's assault on Gaza and its occupation of Palestinian territories with antisemitism, and advocacy for Palestinian rights with support for extremism. The government has not announced probes into Islamophobia.

Harvard task forces said in April that the school's Jewish and Muslim students faced bigotry and abuse during Israel's war. – Reuters

€550m Meta data protection trial starts

MADRID: A Spanish court opened a trial yesterday over a €550 million (RM2.7 billion) lawsuit brought by more than 80 Spanish media organisations against Facebook owner Meta for allegedly breaching European Union data protection rules.

EU rules oblige companies to obtain users' consent to create personalised advertising from their data.

Spain's main media association AMI says the US tech giant, which also owns Instagram and WhatsApp,

created "unfair competition" by "systematically" breaking the law between May 2018 and July 2023.

The association alleges unfair competition in digital advertising sales and is seeking €551 million in compensation.

"This isn't a case that affects only AMI's outlets, it has implications for media worldwide," AMI director-general Irene Lanzaco told reporters before entering the Madrid commercial court where the trial will run until Thursday.

"What's at stake is the very survival of news media, which is being threatened by the predatory behaviour of a platform like Meta, acting with no regard for our legal framework."

Meta has denied any damage or violation of EU rules, saying in a statement sent to AFP the AMI lawsuit "is not based on any evidence regarding the alleged harm".

AMI is "deliberately ignoring the evolution of the advertising industry over the past few years," Meta said.

"Meta complies with all applicable laws and has provided clear options, transparent information, and a wide range of tools for users to control their experience on our services."

Witnesses were scheduled to testify yesterday, with expert reports and closing arguments expected today.

Media groups represented by AMI include Prisa, owner of Spain's top-selling daily newspaper *El Pais*; Godo, publisher of the Barcelona-based daily *La Vanguardia*; Vocento, which

publishes the conservative daily *ABC*; and Unidad Editorial, whose titles include *El Mundo* and sports daily *Marca*.

Spanish radio and television stations have launched a separate lawsuit against Meta for the same reasons, seeking €160 million in damages.

A similar lawsuit has also emerged in France, where 200 media groups, including major television networks and leading newspapers, filed legal action against Meta in April. – AFP

LARGE WARSHIP SEEN NEAR GAZA FLOTILLA

ISTANBUL: A large warship was spotted early yesterday near the Global Sumud Flotilla as its organisers reported a state of high alert at sea. Contact has been restored with the *Alma* ship after being lost for a short time, said an Al Jazeera correspondent on board the flotilla. According to the correspondent, an Israeli vessel came within just 5ft of the *Alma*, the lead ship in the flotilla, and jammed all of its communication systems as well as its engine, rendering them inoperative. He said participants on board the *Alma* threw their phones into the sea in line with established security protocols. The correspondent later reported that the Israeli vessel had left the area, allowing the flotilla to resume its course towards Gaza. The flotilla announced that its vessels are about 225km from the enclave. – Bernama

U.S. GOVT BEGINS SHUTTING DOWN

WASHINGTON: The US government began shutting down yesterday after lawmakers and President Donald Trump failed to break a budget impasse during acrimonious talks that hinged on Democratic demands for health care funding. Republicans and Democrats blamed each other for the deadlock that will impact hundreds of thousands of government workers and the millions of Americans who use the services they provide. The shutdown, which will stop work at federal departments and agencies, comes as deep partisan divisions in Washington have raised fears over what will be the length and consequences of the halt. Trump threatened to punish Democrats and their voters by targeting progressive priorities and forcing mass public sector job cuts during the first stoppage since the one during his previous term. – AFP

HOUTHIS CLAIM ATTACK ON DUTCH CARGO SHIP

SANAA: Yemen's Houthi force claimed responsibility yesterday for an attack on a Dutch cargo ship this week in the busy shipping lane of the Gulf of Aden. The group has said the attacks on commercial shipping are in support of Palestinians. The cargo ship *MV Minervagracht* was hit by a projectile on Monday, wounding two people and sparking a fire, its owner said. It was targeted "because its owner company violated the decision to ban entry to the ports of occupied Palestine," the group said in a statement carried by Saba news agency. British maritime security company Ambrey said the ship had previously been targeted on Sept 23 en route to Djibouti. – AFP

COMMENT by Dr Amanallah Soltani

Finding voice through rhythm and inclusion

IN a classroom in Malaysia, a boy with autism sits quietly, avoiding eye contact and struggling to participate in group activities.

Yet, when a drum is placed in his hands, his face lights up. He begins to tap out a steady rhythm and soon his classmates join in. For the first time, he feels connected to the group, not through words but through music.

As Malaysia advances its commitment to inclusive education under Budget 2026, inclusion must be understood as not only about access but also ensuring every child feels they belong and can participate meaningfully.

To achieve this, we need creative approaches that go beyond textbooks and exams. Music may be one of the most powerful yet underutilised tools to help children with special needs thrive in the classroom. As a universal language, music transcends disability and background, giving children new ways to express themselves, connect with peers and engage in learning.

Through rhythm, melody and movement, music breaks down social barriers, reduces stigma and fosters collaboration. It also supports memory, emotional growth and motor skills, helping children succeed on their own terms. Most importantly, music creates spaces where children with special needs are not merely present but truly included as valued members of the learning community.

To make music a true part of inclusive education, we need more than occasional singing sessions or annual concerts. What Malaysia truly needs is a structured music education curriculum that integrates music into everyday learning and teaching.

The key to making such a curriculum successful is flexibility. Every child with special needs is different. By tailoring music activities to suit diverse abilities, strengths and interests, teachers can ensure that every child has an opportunity to participate meaningfully. This flexibility promotes inclusion while building confidence and a sense of belonging among children with special needs.

More importantly, a structured, inclusive music curriculum does not depend on expensive instruments or advanced technology. With appropriate training, teachers can transform simple,

“Music may be one of the most powerful yet underutilised tools to help children with special needs thrive in the classroom. As a universal language, music transcends disability and background, giving children new ways to express themselves, connect with peers and engage in learning.”



When musical activities are adapted to students' abilities, strengths and interests, every child has the chance to participate meaningfully, promoting inclusion, confidence and a sense of belonging.
— BERNAMAPIC

everyday musical tools into powerful resources for learning. When this happens, music becomes more than an activity; it becomes a pathway to learning, connection and genuine inclusion for every child.

Budget 2026 provides a valuable opportunity to make Malaysian classrooms more inclusive by strengthening infrastructure and resources while embracing creative approaches such as music.

Policy and funding could equip schools with basic instruments and teaching materials, alongside training for teachers to integrate music into their practice. Classrooms would be more engaging, joyful and connected, especially for students with special needs.

We can look to successful examples such as The Music Man Project, a UK-based charity that trains and supports students with special needs, enabling them to perform in professional venues such as the Royal Albert Hall. Their

work highlights how music can develop skills while fostering identity and purpose, challenging public perceptions of what people with special needs can achieve.

Locally, we can take inspiration from Stefanus Lucas from SK Pendidikan Khas (P) Kota Kinabalu, RISE Educator Award 2025 recipient, who sees potential in his students, giving them a sense of identity, pride and purpose. Working with visually and hearing-impaired students, he established a specialised music room for them with limited resources and gave them a medium to express themselves confidently.

As a music educator who has worked with children with special needs, I see firsthand how research can play a vital role in shaping effective practices.

By investing in research, Malaysia can generate evidence-based strategies that ensure music is not just an occasional activity but a meaningful part of inclusive education.

Partnerships between schools,

universities and community musicians can help translate this research into practice, creating sustainable and scalable impact.

If Budget 2026 invests in creative and holistic approaches like a structured music education curriculum, Malaysia can become a leader in inclusive education, a nation where every child, regardless of ability, is given the chance to find their voice.

Sometimes, that voice begins with a simple beat of a drum.

Dr Amanallah Soltani is a senior lecturer at the School of Education, Faculty of Social Sciences and Leisure Management, Taylor's University. Drawing on his experience as a music teacher for students with special needs, he has published works on inclusive teaching practices and is currently developing a research proposal to design a music education curriculum tailored for special education. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

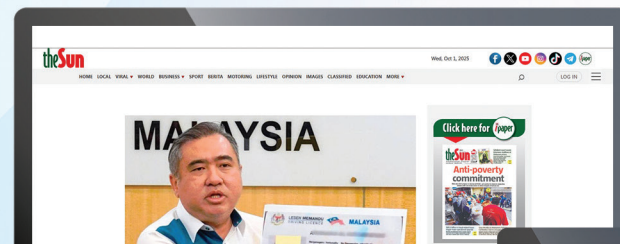
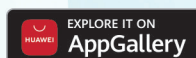


ENJOY A SEAMLESS READING EXPERIENCE.



Read our iPaper at <https://thesun.my>

Or download theSun app on the AppStore or Google Play



New edge in hiring to retain talent

COMMENT by May Leng Kwok

WORKPLACES have undergone significant transformations in recent years. Rapid technological advancements, economic shifts and changing demographics have reshaped the way people work and what they expect from their employers.

They have also influenced talent management strategies. According to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's (CIPD) Asia Employee Benefits Report 2025, developed in partnership with AIA, increasing employee satisfaction and retaining current employees were the most important goals when designing benefits in Malaysia. This is against the backdrop of rising costs (54%), economic uncertainty (37%) and digital transformation (34%), which were identified as the top trends influencing benefits strategies.

As a result, organisations find themselves navigating a complex and ever-changing talent landscape, and if they don't listen to their employees, they risk losing out on attracting and retaining top talent.

Misalignment of talent strategies

Despite the need for employee well-being, many companies are struggling to align their talent strategies with the evolving expectations of the workforce.

According to the report, 65% of respondents said budgets are the main challenge when designing employee benefits, followed by understanding diverse employee

expectations (47%). Yet, over half (52%) of Malaysian organisations said that gathering employee feedback was important as part of this process.

While this is promising, more companies need to follow suit as a misalignment between what employees want and what employers offer can have several consequences.

Firstly, many organisations continue to offer traditional, outdated benefits that may no longer resonate with younger workers.

Secondly, while employees are demanding flexibility, many companies in Asia are not fully embracing flexible work arrangements – there continues to be poor work-life balance, with long working hours and high-stress environments remaining common across the region.

Thirdly, while employees increasingly prioritise personal growth and learning, not all employers provide adequate pathways for career development.

And fourthly, while the younger generation of talent is seeking employers whose values align with their own, many companies fail to articulate a compelling mission or demonstrate social responsibility.

This disconnect between what companies are offering and what employees want has led to increased turnover rates, difficulty in attracting talent and reduced employee engagement, and in many cases negatively impacting business performances.

Attracting and retaining top talent

Organisations must adopt a multifaceted approach that addresses the diverse needs and expectations of the modern workforce. Central to this is regularly conducting employee surveys to gather feedback, such as through "pulse" surveys, as well as embracing technology.

New human resources (HR) tools, like digital health solutions and chatbots, are helping organisations tailor employee initiatives and use people data effectively to assess what works. For example, artificial intelligence (AI) can enable better analytical insights so that benefits can be tailored to increase uptake and engagement while reducing administrative costs.

Tools like employee sentiment analysis can help identify what employees value, address concerns and help to guide more targeted, effective benefits strategies. This approach ensures that benefits and policies align with actual employee preferences.

With employees increasingly looking for work-life balance, another key strategy will be to prioritise employee well-being. The good news is that in Malaysia, 52% of employers are planning to enhance their health and well-being benefits and 44% are planning to enhance outpatient insurance, followed by life and accident insurance (38%), hospital and surgical insurance (37%) and mental health support (36%).

While there is an ongoing stigma around mental health in Asian markets, proactively supporting employee mental health and well-being will build a healthier, more motivated and productive workforce.

Additionally, investing in preventive care and boosting employee health can also be cost-effective by reducing insurance claims. Organisations should create safe spaces for health discussions and offer an array of programmes, including counselling, mental health days and resilience training, to provide holistic well-being support, backed by a strong culture that prioritises employee well-being.

Following the pandemic, flexible work arrangements have also become increasingly important to the workforce. More employers are recognising this, with 17% in Malaysia considering more flexible options, compared to 9% in Hong Kong and 8% in Singapore.

Concurrently, investing in learning and development is vital, with 32% of Malaysian employers planning to enhance their training and career development opportunities in the next two years, compared with only 14% of those in Singapore and 10% in Hong Kong.

A possible driver for this could be the calls for more upskilling initiatives to help older employees stay relevant in the labour market as the government considers raising the retirement age. This focus on growth and flexibility will help attract and retain top talent.

Fostering a strong company culture, offering competitive compensation and benefits and promoting work-life integration are key to enhancing employee engagement, retention and overall organisational effectiveness.

Equally important is maintaining open lines of communication. Employers should actively engage their workforce and encourage

managers and leaders to communicate regularly with their teams. Consistent dialogue builds trust, ensures alignment and helps employees feel heard and valued, all of which are crucial to sustaining long-term commitment and loyalty.

The future employer

As we look ahead, organisations that successfully adapt to changing employee expectations will be best positioned to thrive in the competitive Asian market.

By embracing flexibility, prioritising employee well-being and fostering a culture of continuous learning and growth, companies can create workplaces that not only attract top talent but also inspire loyalty and high performance.

The future of work in Asia will see a continued blurring of traditional boundaries between work and life, with an increased emphasis on purpose-driven careers and holistic experiences.

HR managers who can anticipate and respond to these evolving needs will build resilient, engaged workforces capable of driving innovation and success in an increasingly dynamic business environment.

By engaging with employees and truly understanding and meeting their changing expectations, companies can position themselves as employers of choice, securing the talent they need to thrive in the years to come.

May Leng Kwok is head of Market Development, Global, for the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

Why one-size-fits-all public transport does not work for Malaysia

COMMENT by Joshua Woo Sze Zeng

AT a recent forum, I asked the audience: "How many of you would choose not to buy a car in the future, even if you could afford one?"

Half the room raised their hands. I looked at them and said, "You must be from Klang Valley".

Because in Klang Valley, people have options. They can choose from three LRT lines, two MRT lines, a BRT service, KTM Komuter, the KLIA Express, a monorail, Rapid buses and even on-demand DRT vans.

But in towns like Nibong Tebal, Jitra or Kampar, life is a different story. Without a car or at least a motorcycle, basic daily routines like commuting to work, buying groceries or getting to school become nearly impossible.

It is easy to point fingers and say the government hasn't invested enough in public transport outside major cities but that explanation is too simplistic. Public transport investment isn't one-size-fits-all; it depends on several key factors:

➔ Population density

In dense urban areas, a single train can move thousands of people within minutes but in small or dispersed towns, that same train may run half-empty. That is why the type of public transport must match the area's density.

➔ Ridership

Public transport infrastructure is only valuable if people actually use it. Living near a station does not matter if most people still prefer to drive. Policymakers must study current usage and projected demand.

➔ Population growth

Expanding a transport system makes sense if an area is growing. But in areas where the population is stagnant or shrinking, such investments can be wasteful.

➔ Population policy

Density is not natural but shaped by urban planning. When governments build high-density housing, offices, schools and malls near LRT stations, ridership will increase. This is the principle behind transit-oriented development. But if planning prioritises highways and low-density suburbs, public transport use will decline.

➔ Development cost

Heavy rail systems like LRT or MRT cost billions. They are justified only in large, high-demand cities that are designed to be high-density and growing. In smaller towns, more flexible and cost-effective options, like buses or vans, are more realistic, though most people still prefer private vehicles.



➔ Time efficiency

Good public transport systems must move people quickly. In dense cities, an MRT line can serve thousands in a short time. In rural areas, slower and less frequent buses may not meet people's needs. Slow or fragmented journeys discourage regular use.

➔ Private vehicle affordability

If cars and motorcycles are cheap and convenient, public transport will always struggle to attract riders. But when fuel, tolls or parking become expensive, more people will use public transport. When we consider all these factors together, the picture becomes clearer. Dense cities with pro-density

policies and high private vehicle costs require segregated systems, such as MRT and LRT. In contrast, smaller, low-density, car-dependent regions that rely only on flexible systems risk remaining stuck in a cycle of commuting inefficiency. Ultimately, government and citizens must decide what kind of city do we want to build.

Do we pursue a transit-city model like Singapore or Hong Kong, where pro-density policies and high vehicle costs sustain high-efficiency, high-ridership systems? Or do we opt for a low-to-medium density model with cheap vehicle ownership, where even efficient transit systems struggle to

Public transport efficiency is not just about the system itself; it is about fitting the right system to the right place, at the right time, supported by the right policies.

– **ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THE SUN**

achieve only moderate ridership? Or perhaps we continue with a high-density model with cheap vehicle ownership, like Kuala Lumpur, where efficient transit systems exist but still struggle to reach high ridership?

Simply put: Would we rather be stuck in traffic jams or in a crowded MRT? Public transport efficiency is not just about the system itself; it is about fitting the right system to the right place, at the right time, supported by the right policies. So, what kind of city do we want to build?

Comments:

letters@thesundaily.com

A renter's story

Roshni still remembers the frustration of her search for a home in Kuala Lumpur. Many of the best priced properties she came across carried an unspoken condition that tenants of her race were not welcome. On top of being denied choice, she sometimes ended up paying more than others for a room of the same size.

Ikmal's journey was no different. Looking for a place in Bukit Jalil, he experienced rejection just as frequently. By his estimate, six or seven out of 10 landlords or agents would dismiss him outright based on race. Some cloaked their bias behind flimsy reasons, suggesting he accept certain conditions that had little to do with tenancy. Even when he agreed, another excuse would quickly follow and the door would close.

Abby, a fresh graduate in Penang, faced similar frustrations. The apartments that matched her budget often came with an invisible label: reserved only for tenants of a particular race. Properties that did accept her were usually priced higher, leaving her trapped between exclusion and unaffordability.

Their experiences are not unusual. It is a reminder that in Malaysia's property market, decisions are not always guided by facts, but by assumptions. And when bias shapes access to housing, the consequences extend beyond one renter. They weaken trust in the market and limit the very idea of fairness in our society.

The scale of the challenge

Studies by Architects of Diversity Malaysia (AOD) underscore how widespread such discrimination is. The survey found that: Six in 10 Malaysian tenants have experienced some form of racial discrimination while renting.

On whether racial discrimination in rentals should be illegal, Malaysians are split: 49.9% say landlords should be allowed to choose tenants by race. 31.6% believe it should be illegal.

Younger Malaysians (18-24) and Indian

Towards an inclusive rental market in Malaysia

Malaysians show the strongest support for outlawing discrimination (39% and 63.8% respectively).

"These numbers reveal not just the prevalence of discrimination, but also how differently communities experience and perceive it," says Architects of Diversity Malaysia (AOD) co-founder & executive director Jason Wee.

"Young people, students, and certain communities are particularly vulnerable, with many finding their housing options limited before they even begin their search. The challenge is even greater for lower income groups, where an estimated half of B40 households in the Klang Valley rent their homes. When bias shapes housing outcomes, it denies individuals a place to live and entrenches division across society. It also adds an extra layer of pressure on those who are already navigating affordability concerns in a challenging rental market."

From stereotypes to fairness

Bias in housing is often rationalised as caution, but stereotypes are a poor proxy for reliability. A fairer system prioritises objective criteria: ability to pay rent, employment stability, past rental behaviour, and verified references.

"The question should not be 'who are you?' but 'can you meet the responsibilities of

tenancy?'" Wee adds.

PropertyGuru and iProperty country manager (Malaysia) Kenneth Soh agrees: "When landlords evaluate tenants transparently and fairly, they not only reduce vacancy risk but also strengthen trust in the market. A professional rental ecosystem is one where expectations are clear, accountability is shared, and inclusivity becomes the standard rather than the exception."

What industry players can do

Creating an inclusive rental market is not the responsibility of one party but of the entire ecosystem:

- Property professionals can set higher standards through training, codes of conduct, and consistent tenant evaluation frameworks.
- Landlords and tenants can reinforce fairness in their everyday choices, from listing inclusively to supporting platforms that uphold it.
- Platforms can establish norms through features that make inclusivity visible, while deploying safeguards like content moderation and reporting tools.
- Policymakers can cement progress with enforceable rules, simple dispute resolution, and better information symmetry to reduce uncertainty.

"As a marketplace, we are not neutral bystanders," says Soh. "Every listing, every filter,

every moderation choice sets the tone for how fairness is practised in the market. By embedding transparency into design, the industry signals that inclusivity is not just ethical, but also integral to professionalism in property."

A market signal for inclusivity

To help shift culture, PropertyGuru Malaysia introduced the "Everyone Welcome" tag in 2025, a voluntary feature allowing landlords and agents to signal that their listings are open to tenants of all races, religions, genders, and backgrounds.

The response has been encouraging since its initial rollout in April 2025. Today, 10% of active rental listings carry the tag, and 2.5% of renters are actively searching for these inclusive listings. This indicates a broader cultural signal: homeseekers expect fairness as part of their rental journey.

"The Everyone Welcome tag was designed to do more than improve listings," Soh explains. "It signals that inclusivity can be a point of pride. Early adoption shows landlords and agents are willing to stand behind that principle."

This article is contributed by PropertyGuru country manager (Malaysia) Kenneth Soh and co-founder & executive director of Architects of Diversity Malaysia Jason Wee.

Ikea Malaysia stays affordable amid shifting 'life at home' trends

PETALING JAYA: Ikea Malaysia has unveiled its strategic focus on affordability, positioning it as the anchor of how the well-loved home furnishing retailer responds to shifting Malaysian lifestyles.

Over the next 12 months, Ikea is set to prioritise four areas that reflect where Malaysians are investing most at home i.e. cooking and eating, dining, living, and storage – providing solutions and inspirations designed to be more affordable, accessible and sustainable.

The renewed focus follows insights from the latest Ikea Life at Home report, presented at the "Malaysia's Life at Home: Unpacked" event. The report shows that just over half of Malaysians (56%) feel positive about their current life at home, with comfort (83%), security (83%) and enjoyment (80%) emerging as the top three needs for a better quality of living.

"Malaysia is dynamic in its home ownership, culture, and the role it plays in people's lives," said Ikea Malaysia country retail director Malcolm Pruys.

The report also reveals how the role of home has evolved. More than just a shelter, it has become an enabler of lifestyle, financial wellbeing, and personal identity. While most respondents want their ideal home to be a place to unwind, one-third see it as a way to save money, and a quarter aspire for it to generate income.

The insights noted that 43% believe cooking and eating at home is healthier than eating out, while a considerable share of respondents are making more conscious choices about healthy eating (37%) and food waste reduction (38%).

"There is a symbiotic relationship between healthier eating and sustainability,"

Pruys said.

In the year ahead, cooking and dining will take greater emphasis, complemented by living room solutions that encourage connection and relaxation. Storage, which already accounts for 40% of Ikea business, will remain a key priority. In total, more than 2,000 new articles are slated for introduction in 2025/26, reinforcing Ikea's commitment to more affordable, sustainable and enjoyable ways of living.

The report also shows that Malaysians continue to seek ways to improve their living situations. Many families value feeling welcome at home and having someone to socialise with, while a growing number are exploring renovations or moving to a new home in the next two years. Adding a design perspective, Marcus Arvonen, senior designer at Ikea of Sweden and creator of the best-selling Besta modular storage system, shared how democratic design underpins Ikea's approach to the Malaysian market.

"Democratic design is about more than creating beautiful objects. It ensures every product is guided by the most relevant customer needs, while delivering on function, quality, sustainability and price, as well as form," said Arvonen. "What inspires me is how these principles connect with Malaysian life at home where cooking, gathering and creating meaningful spaces with family are so important. Design is universal, but it only truly succeeds when it reflects how people live locally."

To showcase these solutions, Ikea Malaysia is hosting a month-long Ikea House Party from Sept 13 to Oct 5 across all four stores nationwide – Ikea Damansara, Cheras, Tebrau and Batu Kawan.



Designed for millennial buyers, SOL Estate blends sustainability, smart living and community-first design in its first phase.

Exal hands over Phase 1 of SOL Estate in Sarawak

KUALA LUMPUR: The second half of the year is off to a flying start for Exal Malaysia as they announce the successful handover of Phase 1 of SOL Estate.

A milestone in redefining community living standards in Sarawak, SOL Estate is designed around the evolving needs of millennial buyers, combining flexibility, eco-conscious living, and community-first experiences to deliver thoughtfully designed, sustainable homes tailored to the aspirations of a new generation of homeowners.

Millennials make up 25% of Malaysia's population and continue to drive demand in a property market that surged 23.8% in transaction value in H1'24. Despite rising costs, this generation remains deeply committed to homeownership, favouring developments that support sustainability, lifestyle, and long-term value.

SOL Estate was conceived to meet these priorities head-on, redefining sustainability as a principle of livability through a self-sustainable, self-contained estate that integrates eco-conscious infrastructure with lifestyle conveniences.

Phase 1 of SOL Estate Prime comprises 74 units, each integrating eco-conscious architecture, passive design strategies augmented by flexible living spaces, and smart home technologies. Each home has been designed for solar efficiency and natural-cross ventilation, reducing energy

dependence while maintaining thermal comfort in one fell swoop.

Exal Malaysia has appointed Knight Frank Property Management to oversee the long-term upkeep of SOL Estate.

"SOL Estate was built not just as a place to live, but as a place to belong," said Exal Malaysia managing director Albert Ko. "We are honoured to welcome our new homeowners and witness them step into a space they can truly call home – a space designed with their values, ambitions, and wellbeing in mind."

This development forms a part of Exal's larger commitment to sustainable living and smart city innovation. In collaboration with Solarvest and GreenRE, Exal Malaysia has also integrated green-certified solutions across its developments – from renewable energy features such as Passive Solar Design, and cross ventilation features to open-plan, eco-conscious construction materials.

As a key contributor to the Kuching Smart City Master Plan, they also seek to redefine modern neighbourhoods through intelligent infrastructure and environmentally conscious practices.

The handover of Phase 1 sets the stage for the future expansion of SOL Estate, with upcoming phases promising enhanced features and even more personalised living experiences.

Exal Malaysia remains committed to delivering adaptable and aspirational homes that grow with future homeowners, supporting them in building lasting roots.



Policymakers to propose formation of Asean Steel Council amid concerns

KUALA LUMPUR: Asean policymakers have expressed their concerns over the need to ensure that only the highest standards of steel are used in the construction of high-rise buildings in the region, said Deputy Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Liew Chin Tong.

He said policymakers have now agreed to propose to their respective governments to consider the formation of an Asean Council on Steel.

Liew said the council will bring together government officials responsible for steel to discuss common issues in a more structured gathering.

"The worries were the reactions to the earthquakes in Thailand and Myanmar, as well as earthquake risks in the region. Even Peninsular Malaysia has to worry about earthquakes after the occurrence in Segamat recently," he said in a statement yesterday.

According to Liew, while the steel industry associations in Asean engage each other via the Southeast Asia Iron and Steel Institute (SEASI), the governments of Asean nations do not seem to talk to each other about the steel industry.

"Usually, trade officials of Asean would meet regularly, but those responsible for industries rarely venture out of the country.

"Industrial development is treated as a domestic matter and often individual countries see themselves in competition with their neighbours for foreign investments," he added.

Liew recently co-chaired the inaugural roundtable on the steel industry with SEASI secretary-general Yeoh Wee Jin, which was attended by government officials from Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines and Myanmar.

He noted that the meeting also discussed other issues, including steel capacity management, decarbonisation agenda, trade issues such as dumping and countervailing, as well as technology transfer, training, and skills development. — Bernama

Starbucks Malaysia, Tourism Malaysia in VM2026 tie-up

PETALING JAYA: Starbucks Malaysia and Tourism Malaysia unveiled their partnership in support of the Visit Malaysia 2026 (VM2026) campaign in a prelaunch held at Starbucks Reserve Shoppes at Four Seasons Place in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The event introduced a strategic partnership that will see the launch of exclusive merchandise, handcrafted beverages, and locally inspired food, all aimed at celebrating Malaysia's rich cultural heritage and putting the VM2026 campaign on the global map.

As a global brand with local roots, Starbucks Malaysia is uniquely positioned to connect global audiences with authentic local experiences. This campaign marks a milestone for both brands in their shared mission to spotlight Malaysia's unique stories, from flavours to community spirit.

Carrying the official theme of "Surreal Experiences," VM2026 is set

➤ Special merchandise, handcrafted beverages and locally inspired food to showcase country's rich cultural heritage and put Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign on global map

to showcase Malaysia's unparalleled uniqueness. The campaign is symbolised by its two Malayan sun bear mascots, Wira and Manja.

Through this collaboration, Starbucks will complement the national campaign by delivering its known "Starbucks Experience" in unique Malaysian ways which blend global coffee culture alongside moments that celebrate the spirit of VM2026.

The collaboration will feature staggered releases, including a collection of limited-edition tumblers exclusively available at Starbucks

Reserve Shoppes at Four Seasons Place, followed by all airport stores and select stores in Malaysia; specially crafted beverages celebrating bold local flavours.

Launching in 2026 are a *bungkus* (packed) concept food selection, paying nostalgic tribute to classic Malaysian delicacies; Starbucks Edition Wira and Manja, a keychain plushie set; Visit Malaysia 2026 Starbucks Cards; and more to be announced.

"This partnership with Starbucks Malaysia exemplifies how local and international brands can unite to

showcase the richness and diversity of Malaysia," said Tourism Malaysia director-general Datuk Manoharan Periasamy.

"By blending creative storytelling, iconic branding, and distinctly Malaysian flavours, we are confident this partnership will inspire both locals and visitors to explore as well as celebrate the best of our nation in the lead-up to Visit Malaysia 2026."

Beyond the initial launches, the collaboration will feature quarterly refreshes throughout 2026, developed in close partnerships with local artists and communities to introduce localised flavours and creative collaborations that keep the campaign fresh and engaging. In addition, the brand will unveil a series of flagship stores across Malaysia, designated as cultural destinations for 2026. These locations will showcase exclusive décor, immersive experiences and campaign-exclusive offerings, to enhance the VM2026 journey for both tourists and locals.

"Starbucks is honoured to work alongside Tourism Malaysia on this meaningful initiative," said Datuk Sydney Quays, group CEO of Berjaya Food Bhd.

"By bringing the Starbucks Experience to the forefront of this campaign, we aim to complement the surreal experiences of VM2026 with moments of connection in our stores.

"Beyond celebrating Malaysia with our customers both here and around the world, we hope that this collaboration also supports Tourism Malaysia's ambitions under VM2026," he added.

The partnership marks the beginning of a year-long journey, with more announcements and launches to come as VM2026 draws closer.



Visit Malaysia 2026 secretariat head Mohd Amirul Rizal Abdul Rahim (fifth left), Quays (centre) and Manoharan at the prelaunch.

Asean role in global trade to grow with M'sia as star performer: Report

PETALING JAYA: Asean is poised to play a greater role in global trade amid rising interest from global corporates, with Malaysia emerging as the region's star performer as more than three in 10 of companies surveyed are looking to increase or maintain trade activities with the country, a Standard Chartered report reveals.

The report – titled "Future of Trade: Resilience" – presents findings from 1,200 C-suite and senior leaders at global corporates who were surveyed on their outlook for global trade and their corporate strategies over the next three to five years. It highlights the top destinations that multinational companies are considering

for realigning their sourcing, manufacturing and exporting while also providing actionable insights to shape decision making.

The survey reveals that Asean will be a key region for corporates to realign their supply chains with Malaysia ranking second, after India, as the top market of choice for global corporates.

Notably, over half of corporates from Mainland China and the US – Malaysia's first and third largest trading partners respectively – have expressed interest to trade with and manufacture in the country.

Malaysia is also at the centre of trade corridors within Asean that are expected to see more activity.

Respondents from Thailand and Indonesia are exploring opportunities to source more from Malaysia, while the Philippines and Vietnam intend to expand their exports to this market.

Singapore corporates also plan to establish manufacturing facilities in Malaysia, attracted by compelling market advantages such as the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone that aims to streamline bilateral trade and investment in sectors that include manufacturing, logistics and technology.

Recent macroeconomic and geopolitical developments are significantly impacting costs, with 80% of respondents in Malaysia estimating a rise in the overall costs of goods by

10% to 19% in the medium term. In response, 78% of Malaysia corporates are looking to increase digitalisation efforts while 70% and 64% plan to realign supply chain geographically and adjust treasury management strategies respectively.

Standard Chartered Malaysia CEO Mak Joon Nien noted: "The report reveals that 76% of corporates in Malaysia see geopolitical conflict as the top issue in shaping the future of trade, followed by trade tariffs (62%) and emerging technologies (58%)."

"These findings paint a complex yet compelling future for trade as corporates navigate around the fact that the same trends that threaten to disrupt operations can also be oppor-

tunities in shaping global trade.

"As corporates highlight the importance of banking partners that can connect them with vendors and enable supply chain shifts across borders through their extensive network, Standard Chartered is well positioned to step into that role.

"Our on-ground presence across 54 markets – including in all 10 Asean markets – coupled with decades of local market expertise allow them to partner clients in their digitalisation efforts and facilitate flows across trade corridors to drive efficiency and capture new opportunities, especially in Asean with Malaysia at the forefront."



Signature International enters expansion mode

➤ Targets 60 showrooms to strengthen nationwide presence, sees opportunities in commercial sector's interior fit-out space

BY JOHN GILBERT
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

KOTA DAMANSARA: Signature International Bhd is targeting 60 showrooms nationwide, aiming to strengthen its reach among Tier-1 and Tier-2 property developers and customers.

Group CEO KS Lau (pic) said the company, which already operates 50 outlets, plans to add about 10 stores while also branching into new lifestyle concepts.

"We are nurturing our existing stores and gradually adding more. The next step is to expand into curtain and furniture shops, creating an ecosystem where customers can choose one store or combine them into a lifestyle destination," he told *SunBiz* at the launch of its 31st anniversary campaign yesterday.

Lau said Signature International is carefully choosing prime locations for its expansion, focusing on major cities and large townships where accessibility, safety and customer convenience are assured.

"Location is everything. High-end customers expect good accessibility, parking and a safe environment. That is why our new stores will continue to open in Tier-1 cities like Johor and Penang, as well as in large townships with strong growth potential," he added.

Signature International has already established its presence across most major cities



in Malaysia, including Ipoh, Penang, Kota Bharu, Kuantan, Malacca and Negeri Sembilan.

"Every new township we see as a growth opportunity, and that is why you will find us in nearly every state capital today. Our strategy is to ensure that customers, wherever they are in key urban centres, have access to our stores and our promise of quality," said Lau.

Looking ahead, the company is turning its focus towards second-tier cities, aiming to bring its products and lifestyle concepts to communities beyond state capitals.

"The next step is to reach customers in the second-largest cities of each state. These may be smaller stores, but they will give more people the chance to experience our quality products and elevate their living standards," Lau said.

Signature International has also expanded into East Malaysia, with outlets in Kuching, Bintulu, Sibul and Miri in Sarawak, and in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah.

The company has a presence in Bandar Seri Begawan, Brunei.

"We already have a presence in key cities across Sabah and Sarawak, allowing customers to experience our products. However, these outlets are typically smaller in scale compared to those in Peninsular Malaysia," Lau said.

He added that the company's interior fit-out segment is sharpening its focus on the

commercial sector, which includes hotels, corporate towers, hospitality, wellness, food and beverage, and retail projects.

"We see strong opportunities in this space. Recently, we completed projects for Alliance Bank's corporate tower, renovations for Maybank and Merdeka 118, as well as hotels. These contracts represent a significant revenue stream that supports the growth of our business."

Lau said government support for foreign direct investment and the steady inflow of multinational corporations into Malaysia are creating new demand for high-quality interiors.

"While our built-in furniture business continues to serve the premium retail segment, the commercial fit-out business allows us to scale sustainably. By offering a complete solution - from cabinetry and furniture to bedding, flooring and curtains - we can increase the value per customer and strengthen our position as a total home and lifestyle solutions provider," he explained.

Signature International has partnered with RHB Bank Bhd to make premium living more accessible, combining exclusive home design offers with tailored financing solutions. Through this collaboration, customers can enjoy exclusive discounts and bundled home and renovation financing, creating a seamless journey from purchasing a property to designing their dream home.

The RHB Full Flexi Home Renovation Loan Financing offers up to 90% financing based on property value, plus an additional allocation of up to 30% for renovation expenses. This brings the total financing amount to as much as 120% of the property value, with a tenure of up to 35 years, providing homeowners with greater financial flexibility to upgrade, invest, and enhance their homes.

Unitrade welcomes measures outlined in steel industry roadmap

KUALA LUMPUR: The Malaysia Steel Industry Roadmap 2035 (SIR2035) charts a clear path towards stabilisation, transformation and full decarbonisation of the nation's steel industry, said Unitrade Industries Bhd.

Group managing director Nomis Sim Siang Leng said Unitrade welcomes the roadmap's policy directions on accelerating carbon pricing and transparency frameworks, which would promote greater use of green steel and complement the role of metal recycling in reducing emissions.

"As one of the leading players in Malaysia's building materials sector, where we distribute a wide range of steel-based products, we have always believed that sustainability must go hand in hand with industry growth.

"That is why we made a strategic move upstream into metal recycling in January 2024, which now anchors our green business portfolio," he said in a statement.

In financial year 2025, Sim said its green businesses, led by metal recycling, contributed close to 50% of the group's revenue, underscoring its commitment to sustainable growth.

The SIR2035 Roadmap, launched by the Ministry of Investment, Trade, and Industry, underscores the urgency of the transition, noting that demand for green steel is projected to grow 2.5 times over the next five years, potentially accounting for over 40% of total steel purchases by 2030.

From a wholesaler's standpoint, Unitrade also welcomes the roadmap's measures to address industry challenges of structural imbalances and overcapacity.

By managing upstream overcapacity through licensing reform, it said the government is setting the stage for a more disciplined and future-ready industry.

Equally significant is the "Buy Made-in-Malaysia, Buy Low-Emissions" initiative, which prioritises low-emission steel in public procurement and is expected to strengthen demand for sustainable local products, it said. - Bernama

KAF Digital Bank expects to take between 5 and 10 years to break even

BY HAYATUN RAZAK
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

KUALA LUMPUR: KAF Digital Bank expects it could take between five and 10 years to break even, in line with digital banks worldwide, according to founding CEO Rafiza Ghazali.

"Globally, if you can break even in five years, that's already considered very good. The majority take between seven and 10 years. It depends on whether you are more prudent or more aggressive in your early years," she told reporters on the sidelines of the RinggitPlus Malaysian Financial Literacy Survey 2025 yesterday.

Rafiza said the lender, the newest of Malaysia's five licensed digital banks to go live, is still too early in its journey to disclose performance metrics.

"We just launched, so it's still a very, very early stage. I can't really comment on how we have so far. Just give us a couple of months and we can share a little bit more. From what we see with other countries, your first six months of progress doesn't mean much."

She added that initial deposit figures are not necessarily representative of long-term growth. "Especially in the first month, it's not always the true picture of how it is."

Rafiza's remarks came after Maybank Investment Bank on Sept 30 noted that deposits across Malaysia's digital banks remain very small compared with traditional banks.

Analysts said this is expected, as digital banks typically need time to build customer trust, roll out products and gain market share in a



Rafiza (second from left) and Yuen (right) at the event.

crowded financial landscape dominated by established players.

Rafiza noted that digital banks, which operate without physical branches, were introduced in Malaysia to widen financial inclusion, particularly for underserved and unbanked segments.

"Bank Negara is pushing for financial inclusion. The underserved may find it difficult to get even basic banking services from a traditional bank. So I think that's really the main objective of Bank Negara," she said.

According to RinggitPlus's 2025 Malaysian Financial Literacy Survey (RMFLS), this year's findings paint a mixed picture of progress: lower-income and Gen Z Malaysians are making financial strides, while middle-income Malaysians face growing challenges, despite broader improvements in retirement planning, credit awareness, and digital money management.

Ringgitplus CEO Yuen Tuck Siew said 55% of those earning below RM2,000 a month say they

have started planning for retirement, up from 48% in 2024.

"Financial literacy is also improving: fewer lower-income Malaysians say they are unfamiliar with credit scores (40%, down from 45% last year), suggesting greater awareness of how credit impacts financial wellbeing."

However, he said 36% of lower-income respondents say they actively avoid using Buy Now, Pay Later services, the highest among all income segments. "In contrast, middle-income Malaysians, particularly those earning between RM5,000 and RM10,000 a month, are seeing their savings power erode."

Yuen said they are the only income group to report a decline in savings, with only 23% managing to save between RM1,001 and RM1,500 a month, compared to 29% in 2024. "Meanwhile, the share of this segment saving less than RM500 monthly rose to 39% from 31% in 2024."

In addition, he said rising insurance costs are already having a significant impact on Malaysians across the board, with "22% of policyholders have either switched to a cheaper plan or cancelled at least one policy in the past year due to affordability concerns, a trend most prevalent among lower-income Malaysians."

Despite individual efforts to plan for the future, Yuen said, 43% of Malaysians remain without medical insurance, while 15% rely solely on company-issued medical cards.

"Meanwhile, less than half (48%) report having a life insurance or Takaful policy, suggesting that financial protection continues to be deprioritised amid other cost pressures."

Betamek, Yibang sign MoU to boost EV charging in Asean

KUALA LUMPUR: Betamek Bhd, an original design manufacturer (ODM) and a player in electronics manufacturing services for the automotive industry, wholly owned subsidiary Betamek Research Sdn Bhd (BRSB) signed a MoU with Jiangsu Yibang New Energy Technology Co Ltd (Yibang), a Chinese enterprise specialising in new energy vehicle (NEV) charging protocol conversion technologies.

Yibang specialises in the research, development and commercialisation of Electric Vehicle Communication Converters (EVCC) and Supply Equipment Communication Controllers (SECC). The company supplies its technologies to global automotive manufacturers such as Produa, Vinfast, Mitsubishi and Jiangling Motors Corporation, supporting the growing electric vehicle market with patented and standard-compliant solutions that help OEMs accelerate certification and reduce time-to-market.

Under the MoU, both Betamek and Yibang will explore a comprehensive collaboration covering technical R&D, supply chain management coordination, contract manufacturing and logistics, alongside related supporting products for the Asean region.

Via this tie-up, the company will leverage its experience in research, design and development for electronics manufacturing services and play a role in supporting the production of Yibang's EVCC and SECC products in Malaysia.

At the same time, Yibang will bring to the partnership its proprietary hardware, software, firmware and application technologies for EVCC and SECC devices, which are critical components for battery management systems in electric vehicles.

The partnership also outlines the establishment of Yibang-compliant facilities by Betamek in Malaysia for the assembly of EVCC and SECC devices, with Yibang agreeing to exclusively outsource the manufacturing and assembly of its solutions to Betamek for markets and customers in Asean region. In addition, both companies intend to jointly undertake marketing and business development initiatives to secure confirmed orders and accelerate the commercialisation of EV charging communication technologies in the region.

MSIA hopes Budget 2026 will elevate semicon sector

► Industry group urges targeted relief, talent incentives and R&D support to cement role in global supply chains and move to 'Made by Malaysia'

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia Semiconductor Industry Association (MSIA) welcomed the government's recognition of the semiconductor industry as a key driver of Malaysia's economy.

Ahead of Budget 2026, the industry looks forward to bolder measures that will strengthen Malaysia's competitiveness and accelerate their climb up the semiconductor value chain, moving from Made in Malaysia to Made by Malaysia under the National Semiconductor Strategy (NSS).

"Budget 2026 is a golden opportunity for Malaysia to move from Made in Malaysia to Made by Malaysia. By delivering targeted cost relief, talent incentives, and stronger support for research, development, commercialisation and innovation, we can accelerate the implementation of the National Semiconductor Strategy and secure Malaysia's place as a global semiconductor powerhouse," said MSIA president Datuk Seri Wong Siew Hai.

Semiconductors are the backbone of modern technologies, powering artificial intelligence (AI), 5G networks, electric vehicles, data centres, and the future of digital industries.

By strengthening this industry, Malaysia not only secures its role in global supply chains but also enables growth across other high-tech industries.

MSIA Budget 2026 key recommendations include managing rising costs of doing business by seeking relief on stamp duty

(exemptions for employment and intercompany contracts, deferment and clearer guidelines) and Sales & Service Tax relief for broader B2B exemptions, relief for capital-intensive industries, investment-linked exemptions supported by incentives for energy efficiency and automation investments.

MSIA hopes the government would introduce the policies to diversify export markets, grants for supply chain resilience, and the introduction of a Qualified Refundable Tax Credit to offset the impact of the Global Minimum Tax and sustain Malaysia's investment competitiveness besides calling for a special funding by the government to enhance the quality of education in STEM and AI in schools and universities.

MSIA also recommends focusing resources on a few public universities such as UniMAP, USM, UTM, and others, as semiconductor centres of excellence, to ensure resources are not spread too thin and are better utilised to support the semiconductor industry and the need to encourage more students to pursue STEM studies, to strengthen the talent pipeline by providing tax relief and incentives for parents of students pursuing STEM.

The industry also requests for targeted tax relief for engineers, especially those in design and development, smart manufacturing and advanced equipment to encourage and retain talents in Malaysia.

MSIA said Malaysia needs to emulate other

countries in utilising foreign STEM graduates and global expertise to fill immediate gaps and support Malaysia's pursuit of advanced design and development for greater innovation success.

It added that, to support the Made by Malaysia initiative, enhance supply chain resilience, strengthen economic complexity, and move further up the value chain – particularly in IC and system design, software and hardware, advanced fabrication, packaging, and equipment technology – they look forward to a strategic announcement in Budget 2026. Such an announcement would help motivate and fund these critical efforts, ensuring Malaysia stays ahead of the competition and achieves the goals of the NSS.

In addition to all the above, MSIA said the government should look at continuing to improve the ease of doing business with faster approvals for investment incentives, an updated Licensed Manufacturing Warehouse (LMW) framework that includes R&D and design-led firms, and facilitation of material movement between different companies' entity within LMW and Free Industrial Zone.

The industry, it added also seeks for a streamlining of Certificate of Completion and Compliance processes, as there are differing requirements across states which creates inefficiencies and higher compliance costs for companies investing nationwide.

There need to be a plan to upgrade customs systems countrywide and thus speeding up the customs approval processes for both imports and exports.

In short, the industry hopes Budget 2026 will deliver targeted cost relief, regulatory streamlining, talent incentives, and strategies to initiate the shift from Made in Malaysia to Made by Malaysia and accelerate the implementation of NSS.

Hong Leong Bank launches community branch in Kulim Hi-Tech Park

KUALA LUMPUR: Hong Leong Bank (HLB) yesterday launched its new Meet @ HLB community branch at Kulim Hi-Tech Park (KHTP) in Kedah, underscoring the bank's commitment to strengthening Malaysia's innovation economy and supporting businesses, entrepreneurs, and local communities in one of the nation's most important industrial hubs.

This is in line with the bank's 5-year bank-wide transformation plan, where it looks to further tailor-make financial solutions for the communities it serves, building on the launch of the first Meet @ HLB community branch and the unveiling of its reimagined flagship branches earlier this year.

Established in 1996, KHTP is Malaysia's first fully integrated high-technology park and a critical engine for economic growth, attracting global and local players in sectors such as semiconductors, electronics, solar, and biotechnology. By setting up a community branch in the heart of the park, HLB is positioning itself as a partner to enterprises of all sizes, from multinational corporations to SMEs and start-ups, offering tailored financial solutions to help them scale, innovate, and thrive.

Group managing director and CEO Kevin Lam said, "High-value industries such as advanced manufacturing, electronics, and green technology are central to Malaysia's growth ambitions, and financial services have a vital role in helping these businesses succeed. With this new community branch at Kulim Hi-Tech Park, we're making banking more accessible to companies and entrepreneurs operating in this fast-growing ecosystem, while supporting the employees and residents who power its success."

Building on the bank's recent strategic



HLB commercial Banking head Ivan Liew (5th from left) and KTPC Group CEO Datuk Mohd Sahil Zabidi (6th from right) officiating the launch of the Meet @ HLB community branch at Kulim Hi-Tech Park.

partnership with the Kulim Technology Park Corporation and the Malaysian Investment Development Authority that was signed in August, the Meet @ HLB community branch in KHTP will function as a one-stop centre empowering the surrounding community including both businesses and residents with the tools needed for success.

"This new community branch will also contribute significantly to the bank's broader

strategy to strengthen its support for SMEs and businesses nationwide by combining innovative financing, cash management, and advisory services with convenient access through our branch network and digital platforms. By creating spaces like this, MNCs, SMEs and entrepreneurs can leverage our banking expertise, build financial resilience, and focus on growing their businesses in line with Malaysia's high-value, innovation-led economy," said Lam.

Separately, Hong Leong Asset Management Bhd (HLAM) yesterday launched the Hong Leong Global Equity Fund, an equity growth fund designed to give local investors access to a globally diversified portfolio.

The fund combines two established equity strategies, each investing in global equities through different investment styles – including value, growth, and ESG (Environmental, Social & Governance) – to create a blended, high-conviction global equity portfolio.

HLAM said that each strategy sleeve is independently managed by a dedicated, specialised investment team, focusing on the best investment ideas within their mandate.

Executive director and CEO Chue Kwok Yan said, "With the world economy in constant transition, investors in Malaysia are searching for resilient solutions that balance opportunity with strong fundamentals. The fund aims to deliver that balance – combining strategic global exposure with focused, best-ideas investing."

Amundi Singapore Ltd is the appointed external fund manager for the fund. Amundi Singapore is part of Amundi – Europe's largest and one of the asset managers with over US\$2.7 trillion (RM11 trillion) in assets under management (as of June 30, 2025). By leveraging global research and investment expertise across the US, Singapore, and Malaysia, the fund provides institutional-quality global exposure to local investors.

The fund is available through HLAM offices, its nationwide agency force, and the online portal HL iSmart Invest. Designed as a growth fund, it currently offers three retail share classes: Class MYR, Class MYR-Hedged, and Class USD.

Asean-CPTPP talks must deliver reforms: Experts

➤ Nov 20 dialogue must go beyond symbolism as global trade order fragments

KUALA LUMPUR: The formal dialogue between Asean and the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), scheduled on Nov 20, 2025, must go beyond symbolic engagement and deliver substantive outcomes.

“Concrete reforms, including standard convergence, supply chain resilience, and micro, small and medium enterprise (MSME) capacity building, are vital if Asean is to remain central in a rapidly fragmenting global trade order, leading economists and policy,” said Tan Sri Dr Munir Majid.

The chairman of CARI Asean Research and Advocacy think tank described the Asean-CPTPP dialogue as an excellent move, but cautioned that it must lead to serious, actionable outcomes rather than more high-level rhetoric.

“This includes convergence of standards, such as rules of origin, to facilitate trade across the wider platform.

“Another is to expand the overlap of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)-CPTPP membership, as well as attracting the European Union (EU) to join the

expanded trade and investment platform,” he told Bernama.

Munir, who is also the Asean Business Club president, said the upcoming Asean-CPTPP dialogue should be viewed as a major test of Asean centrality amid an increasingly unstable global order.

He added that the appointment of a dedicated task force by Asean leaders was necessary to ensure that the objectives are pursued seriously, beyond the limitations of the rotating Asean chairmanship.

Sunway University economics professor Dr Yeah Kim Leng said Malaysia stands to gain significantly from deeper CPTPP collaboration, particularly in electrical and electronics, chemicals, medical devices, machinery and other resource-based manufacturing sectors.

“Efforts to reduce tariff and non-tariff barriers among CPTPP members will boost demand for Malaysia’s exports.

“This is particularly important under the current global environment of heightened uncertainties and geopolitical tensions,” he said.

Yeah also noted that Malaysia’s participation in multiple trade blocs, namely the CPTPP, the RCEP, and the upcoming Digital Economy Framework Agreement – a comprehensive agreement among Asean member countries – would give it a competitive edge to serve as a regional hub.

“Malaysia is well-positioned to transform itself into a major regional production and

trading hub, and also act as a bridge to foster trade among members with less connected markets,” he said.

Meanwhile, Bank Muamalat chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said the CPTPP could act as a “catalyst” for Malaysian businesses, especially MSMEs, to scale up, but only if real investment is made in capacity building.

“MSMEs make up 96% of businesses in the country. That means that financial literacy, digital savviness, and business planning must become core skills.

“A targeted outreach programme to help businesses understand and utilise the preferential treatment under the CPTPP is also important so that they can access new markets and procure raw materials more cost-effectively,” he said.

The Asean-CPTPP dialogue is set to bring together Asean’s 10 member states and the 12 members of the CPTPP, including four overlapping countries: Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam and Brunei.

During a discussion among ministers at the 57th Asean Economic Ministers meeting last week, Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz said Asean and CPTPP will hold a formal dialogue on Nov 20 to explore potential areas of collaboration.

He said the formal dialogue will cover some potential areas of collaboration and cooperation.

‘Made in Malaysia’ agricultural drone takes off

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia’s homegrown drone and automation solutions company, Aonic, yesterday launched the Mist Tec 50 at DroneTechAsia 2025, marking a significant milestone in the nation’s drone ecosystem.

The Mist Tec 50 is the first heavy-duty agricultural drone with a 50-litre payload capacity that was designed and built entirely by local talent.

Developed end-to-end in Malaysia, the Mist Tec 50 involved a team of local engineers, developers, and technicians across the full cycle of design, prototyping, testing, and software integration.

“The Mist Tec 50 is a Made in Malaysia milestone that reflects how far our nation’s innovation ecosystem has come. Aonic is making its mark as an innovative creator, proving that local talent can scale to meet both global benchmarks and the toughest demands of agriculture,” said Aonic founder and CEO Cheong Jin Xi.

“Together, we look towards overcoming these challenges through end-to-end hardware and software innovation.

“Through the Mist Tec 50, and our proprietary Airmap Desktop and Mist Flight App, we are empowering farmers to embrace the future of modern agriculture with greater productivity and resilience.”

This capability is supported by Aonic’s proprietary software ecosystem: Airmap Desktop and the Mist Flight App, designed to work in tandem as complementary tools.

Airmap Desktop is a fleet management and advanced analytics system, equipped with an AI-powered data engine for tasks such as tree counting, crop monitoring, and yield estimation.

The Mist Flight App, developed for the Mist Drone series, provides live location tracking, telemetry data, and real-time video streaming to the remote controller.

Together, these complementary tools support and elevate the Mist Tec 50, making it especially effective for larger-scale fleet management and plantation operations.

This integration of hardware and software reflects Aonic’s long-term vision to build an automation ecosystem spanning land, air, and sea.

Petronas Gas gets tax exemption from MoF for reorganisation

KUALA LUMPUR: Petronas Gas Bhd (PGB) has received approval from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) for a tax exemption related to its internal reorganisation plan.

PGB informed the stock exchange in a filing that the MoF, via a letter dated Sept 24 and received on Sept 30, has granted the exemption, following the board’s approval of the plan on July 23.

The restructuring will be undertaken through a members’ scheme of arrangement under the Companies Act 2016, involving the transfer of its main businesses, gas

transportation, gas processing, and utilities into newly formed wholly owned subsidiaries.

Under the plan, the gas transportation business will be transferred to PG TransCo Sdn Bhd (TransCo); the gas processing business will go to PG Gas Processing Sdn Bhd (GasPro) and the utilities business will be placed under PG Utilities East Sdn Bhd (UT-East), which is wholly owned by PG Energia Sdn Bhd (Energia), itself a wholly owned subsidiary of PGB.

PGB said the exercise aims to streamline

operations by separating regulated and non-regulated businesses, enhance transparency, strengthen operational focus, and provide greater flexibility in capital management.

The company added that the reorganisation will not affect its issued share capital, substantial shareholders’ shareholdings, or materially impact its earnings and net assets for the financial years ending 2025 and 2026.

PGB expects to make the necessary applications within three months, with completion targeted for the third quarter of 2026. – Bernama

Bridgenet Solutions secures RM80 million financing from AmBank

PETALING JAYA: AmBank Group has signed a RM80 million supply chain financing facility with Bridgenet Solutions Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of CelcomDigi Group, a move that aligns with the group’s ambition to expand its enterprise segment by offering integrated cybersecurity, ICT solutions and Cloud Solutions.

Founded in 2003, Bridgenet Solutions began as a network security provider, offering firewall and connectivity solutions with 24/7 support.

Over the years, it has evolved into a full-spectrum ICT provider, delivering end-to-end solutions across network, security, systems and cloud infrastructure.

In 2025, Bridgenet is recognised as a Comprehensive Managed Security Service Provider (MSSP), operating a fully functional Security Operations Centre (SOC) and enabling enterprises with cloud, AI and 5G innovations.

Over the years, Bridgenet has established partnerships with global technology leaders and many others to accelerate its growth trajectory and reinforce its position as a fast-scaling tech player in Malaysia.

By leveraging AmBank’s supply chain financing facility, Bridgenet is able to secure a steady and sustainable income stream from customer onboarding through to final collection.

As a result, Bridgenet is well-positioned to scale its operations efficiently – bringing the company closer to their goal of becoming Malaysia’s largest ICT provider by 2027.

AmBank Group managing director of business banking, Christopher Yap said: “Our financial support for Bridgenet Solutions reflects AmBank’s strategic commitment to advancing Malaysia’s ICT sector and driving innovation across industries.

“With the ICT industry valued at RM134.5 billion in 2025 and projected

to grow at a 9.61% CAGR through 2030, Malaysia is rapidly positioning itself as a regional digital hub. The digital economy is expected to contribute 25.5% to national GDP, amounting to RM382 billion by the end of 2025.

“Through AmBank’s Supply Chain Financing facility, Bridgenet is empowered to sustain its global partnerships and scale efficiently – delivering impactful solutions that support Malaysia’s digital transformation.”

Bridgenet Solutions Group CEO Keane Leong said: “This RM80 million facility from AmBank marks a significant milestone in our growth journey.

“It enables us to scale our operations, strengthen our global partnerships, and continue delivering innovative ICT solutions that support Malaysia’s digital transformation.

“As part of the CelcomDigi Group, we remain committed to empowering enterprises with secure, agile, and future-ready technologies.”



(Standing from left) AmBank commercial banking 2 head Patrick Chin, Yap, Leong and Bridgenet Solutions director Dzul Effendy Ahmad Hayan. (Seated from left) AmBank foreign direct investment desk head Yeoh Siew Peng, and Bridgenet Solutions CFO Marcus Woo.

Indonesia's August trade surplus **widest** in three years

➤ Imports fall 6.6% year-on-year, inflation picks up to 2.65%

JAKARTA: Indonesia recorded a bigger than expected US\$5.49 billion (RM23.1 billion) trade surplus in August, the largest monthly number in almost three years, as a sharp drop in imports more than made up for slowing export growth, official data showed yesterday.

Economists polled by Reuters had expected a US\$4 billion surplus in August.

The country had a US\$4.17 billion surplus in the previous month.

Southeast Asia's largest economy has enjoyed a relatively large trade surplus for the past few months as exporters front-loaded shipments to the US in a bid to beat the tariff deadline of Aug 7.

August exports grew 5.78% annually to US\$24.96 billion, the weakest growth in four months but slightly faster than the 5.5% expected by economists in the poll, the data showed.

US-bound shipments were worth US\$2.72 billion in August, down 12.4% from July, but still up about 3% from the same month in 2024.

The US, a major export market for Jakarta, set a 19% tariff rate on Indonesian products, in line with regional peers and well below the 32% first flagged in April.

The overall figure for August shipments was also bolstered by



A truck near stacks of containers at Tanjung Priok Port in Jakarta. – REUTERS/SPIC

rising exports of palm oil, nickel, gold and jewellery.

Imports dropped 6.56% to US\$19.47 billion, far more than the 1.6% decline predicted in the poll, with imports of gold and jewellery, iron and steel, organic chemicals and cereals registering the biggest fall.

The rupiah gained slightly after the data, to trade almost flat from yesterday's close.

Bank Permata economist Faisal Rachman expected exports for the rest of the year to soften due to

shipments to the US potentially declining and subdued global demand, particularly from biggest buyer China.

Imports could also rise on Jakarta's commitment to buy American products, a potential influx of Chinese goods, and the government's pro-growth policy strengthening import demand, Faisal said.

Meanwhile, Indonesia's annual inflation rate in September picked up to 2.65% from 2.31%, still well within the central bank's 1.5% to 3.5% target range.

The poll had expected 2.50%.

The acceleration was due to higher food and transportation prices.

Bank Indonesia has since September 2024 cut interest rates by a total of 150 basis points, taking advantage of low inflation to aid economic growth, although some investors worry the central bank is under pressure from the government to ease monetary policy.

The annual core inflation in September was 2.19%, matching expectations. – Reuters

Taiwan 'will not agree' to make 50% of its chips in US

TAIPEI: Taiwan "will not agree" to making 50% of its semiconductors in the United States, the island's lead tariff negotiator said yesterday, as Washington pressures Taipei to produce more chips on US soil.

Vice-Premier Cheng Li-chiun's remarks came after US Secretary of Commerce Howard Lutnick said he had proposed to Taiwan a 50-50 split in chip production.

"I want to clarify that this is the US's idea. Our negotiation team has never made a 50-50 commitment to a chip split," Cheng told reporters in Taipei.

"Please be rest assured that we did not discuss this issue this time, and we will not agree to such a condition."

Cheng spoke after returning from Washington where she said negotiations over US tariffs on Taiwanese shipments "made some progress".

Taiwan is struggling to finalise a tariff deal with Washington, after President Donald Trump's administration imposed a temporary 20% levy that has alarmed the island's manufacturers.

Trump has also threatened to put a "fairly substantial tariff" on semiconductors coming into the country.

Soaring demand for AI-related technology has fuelled Taiwan's trade surplus with the United States – and put it in Trump's crosshairs.

More than 70% of the island's exports to the United States are information and communications technology, which includes chips, the Cabinet said in a statement yesterday.

In a bid to avoid the tariffs, Taipei has pledged to increase investment in the United States, buy more of its energy and increase its own defence spending to more than three percent of gross domestic product.

Taiwan produces more than half of the world's semiconductors and nearly all of the high-end ones.

The concentration of chip manufacturing in Taiwan has long been seen as a "silicon shield" protecting it from an invasion or

blockade by China, which claims it as part of its territory – and an incentive for the United States to defend it.

In an interview with NewsNation broadcast over the weekend, Lutnick said having 50% of Taiwan's chip production in the US would ensure "we have the capacity to do what we need to do if we need to do it".

"That has been the conversation we've had with Taiwan, that you have to understand that it's vital for you to have us produce 50%.

"Our goal is to get to 40% market share, and maybe 50% market share, of producing the chips and the wafers, you know the semiconductors we need for American consumption, that's our objective." – AFP

India's central bank proposes to boost international usage of rupee

MUMBAI: India's central bank yesterday proposed steps to boost the rupee's, global use, including allowing local banks to lend in rupees to businesses in neighbouring countries and setting official reference exchange rates for major trading partner's currencies.

Reserve Bank of India governor Sanjay Malhotra announced the measures alongside the central bank's monetary policy decision yesterday wherein India's rate-setting panel decided to keep rates unchanged, along expected lines.

"We have been making steady process in this regard," the governor said, referring to the rupee's internationalisation, and said that under the proposed changes, authorised Indian banks will be permitted to make rupee-denominated loans to non-residents from Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka, for cross-border trade transactions.

Malhotra also said that transparent reference rates for currencies of India's major trading partners would be established, to facilitate rupee-based transactions.

"The objective is to minimise the use of crossing currencies to get rates. That'll help both our currency and the other currency," RBI deputy governor T Rabi Sankar said in a press-conference post the announcement of the central bank's policy decision.

The Indonesian rupiah and the United Arab Emirates dirham are among the currencies the central bank is looking to establish reference rates for, Sankar said.

"This is a case where the reference rate has to be shown first and the market has to pick up from there," he said.

The RBI currently publishes reference rates for the US dollar, euro, Japanese yen and sterling.

It also proposed to allow foreign entities to invest surplus rupee balances in their so-called vostro accounts into corporate bonds and commercial papers.

The move would widen the permitted uses for funds kept in these accounts.

Vostro accounts are typically held by a domestic bank on behalf of a foreign bank for trading partners to hold rupee-denominated balances from trade transactions.

In August, the RBI had allowed foreign investors to invest their surplus vostro balances into central government securities. – Reuters

South Korea posts record semiconductor exports in September

SEOUL: South Korea recorded its highest ever semiconductor exports in September, official data showed yesterday, despite growing pressure from US tariffs and other restrictions on the crucial sector.

Seoul logged more than US\$16.6 billion in exports of semiconductors last month, up by more than a fifth from September 2024, according to data from the country's Industry Ministry.

The surge was driven by high demand for high-value memory such as HBM chips used in AI servers, the industry ministry said.

Cars, the country's other key export, also performed strongly, with auto shipments climbing to US\$6.4 billion, the highest ever recorded for the month of September.

Driven by these strong figures, overall exports reached US\$65.9 billion, – the highest in more than 42 months.

Exports rose to all major regions except the United States, which fell 1.4% from a year earlier to US\$10.27 billion, weighed down by tariffs on steel, automobiles and machinery.

Asia's fourth-largest economy was initially hit with a 25% across-the-board tariff by the US but managed to secure a last-minute agreement for a reduced 15% rate.

South Korea is one of Washington's biggest trade partners, with

automobiles leading the pack in exports.

The country has yet to secure a deal, with auto tariffs reduced from 25% to 15% but not yet in effect, unlike in neighbouring Japan.

Tariffs of 50% also remain in place on some key exports such as steel and aluminium.

The new record is a "valuable achievement made by our companies, which swiftly diversified their export

markets despite the unfavourable conditions of weakened exports to the US caused by tariff measures", Industry Minister Kim Jung-kwan said.

"Uncertainty surrounding our exports remains high due to ongoing US tariff negotiations, and we must remain vigilant and respond swiftly.

"The government will strengthen policy support to ensure that our companies can maintain export competitiveness." – AFP

Nike turnaround takes root

CEO warns of more work ahead as China lags

NEW YORK: Nike on Tuesday reported a surprise rise in first-quarter revenue and beat profit expectations as the storied sportswear brand's turnaround effort gained traction despite weakness in China and tariffs pressuring margins.

Shares rose 3.4% in choppy extended trading as the company also managed to clear some of its bloated inventory and wholesale revenues returned to growth in a sign of early success for CEO Elliott Hill's plan to get Nike back to its former glory.

Executives warned the recovery was still a way off.

Nike now expects tariffs to cost it about US\$1.5 billion (RM6.3 billion) this year, compared with the US\$1 billion expected earlier.

The sportswear brand makes nearly all its shoes in countries such as Vietnam that have been hit with steep duties under US President Donald Trump.

Hill, a Nike veteran, took the reins last year and has vowed to refocus the brand around core sports like running following a string of

weak quarters, and to producing the kind of cutting-edge products Nike was known for.

"We're also realistic that we are turning our business around in the face of a cautious consumer tariffs uncertainty and teams that are still settling into this sports offence," Hill said on a post-earnings call.

In the company's earnings statement, Hill admitted Nike still had "work ahead to get all sports, geographies, and channels on a similar path".

Nike forecast second-quarter revenue to fall in the low-single digits, compared with estimates of a 3.1% drop.

It expects its struggling wholesale business to record growth for fiscal 2026 as well.

China, Nike's third-largest market, has been a particular problem, and executives said recovery there would take longer.

The country accounted for 15% of overall sales in fiscal 2025.

Sales in Greater China fell for the fifth straight quarter for the three months ended Aug 31 as Nike struggled to drum up demand in the face of stiff competition from domestic brands including Anta and Li-Ning.

The company has also lost market share to younger rivals such as On and Deckers' Hoka.

Hill said Nike sent US basketball stars LeBron James and Ja Morant to China

recently as ambassadors, adding that he expects sports like running and basketball to drive growth in the region.

"Nike beat the low bar set for EPS and showed some wholesale strength, but the underlying fundamentals are still shaky. DTC weakness, margin pressure, and China softness are flashing yellow lights," said David Bartosiak, stock strategist at Zacks Investment Research.

While wholesale revenues rose 5% on a currency neutral basis, margins still faced a drag from higher costs of products due to tariffs.

The company's first-quarter revenue rose 1% on a reported basis to US\$11.72 billion. Analysts had expected a fall of 5.1% to US\$11 billion, according to data compiled by LSEG.

Nike's finance boss Matthew Friend said the company's direct-to-consumer business will not return to growth in fiscal 2026, with North America leading recovery and China lagging behind.

Nike reported first-quarter earnings per share of US\$0.49 handily beating estimates of US\$0.27, as it gained some ground in reducing inventory levels in the quarter.

But the company's gross margin decreased 320 basis points to 42.2%, following a 440-basis-point fall in the preceding three-month period. - Reuters

Kuwait raises US\$11b from bond sale

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait, a top oil producer, raised US\$11.25 billion (RM47 billion) from a three-part bond sale, drawing hefty investor demand for its first US dollar issue since 2017 in a strong return to global debt markets after years of domestic political gridlock.

The Gulf state was the latest sovereign from the region to tap the bond market as strong global appetite and attractive borrowing costs allow governments to diversify funding sources to help plug budget deficits and invest in economic diversification strategies.

Kuwait sold US\$3.25 billion in a three-year portion at 40 basis points (bps) over US Treasuries, US\$3 billion in a five-year tranche at 40 bps over the same benchmark and US\$5 billion in a 10-year portion at 50 bps.

Order books were over US\$23 billion at launch, fixed-income news service IFR reported, which allowed pricing to tighten from early guidance.

Although there were concerns about Kuwait's governance, public finances, oil dependence and limited non-oil economy, its low level of outstanding debt was reassuring to investors, said Justin Alexander, director at Khalij Economics and Gulf analyst at GlobalSource Partners.

Kuwait has estimated sovereign wealth assets of more than US\$1 trillion.

It does not disclose exact figures. It passed a new public debt law in March, after the previous one expired years ago.

That raised the borrowing ceiling to 30 billion dinars (RM413 billion) from 10 billion dinars previously and allowed for the possibility of longer borrowing terms.

The law, like other reforms, had been gridlocked for years over persistent clashes between appointed governments and Kuwait's directly elected parliament.

The emir dissolved Parliament last year for up to four years, paving the way for the government to push through reforms.

Despite plans to diversify revenue sources away from hydrocarbons, oil revenue accounted for almost 90% of government revenue in the last fiscal year. - Reuters

Trump announces Pfizer deal he says will lower drug prices

WASHINGTON: The Trump administration on Tuesday announced a deal granting Pfizer a three-year reprieve on planned tariffs as the pharmaceutical giant vowed to voluntarily lower the prices of unspecified drugs for US purchase.

President Donald Trump, flanked by top health officials, was scant on details regarding what or how many drugs were included in the agreement, the announcement of which came as Washington faced a looming government shutdown.

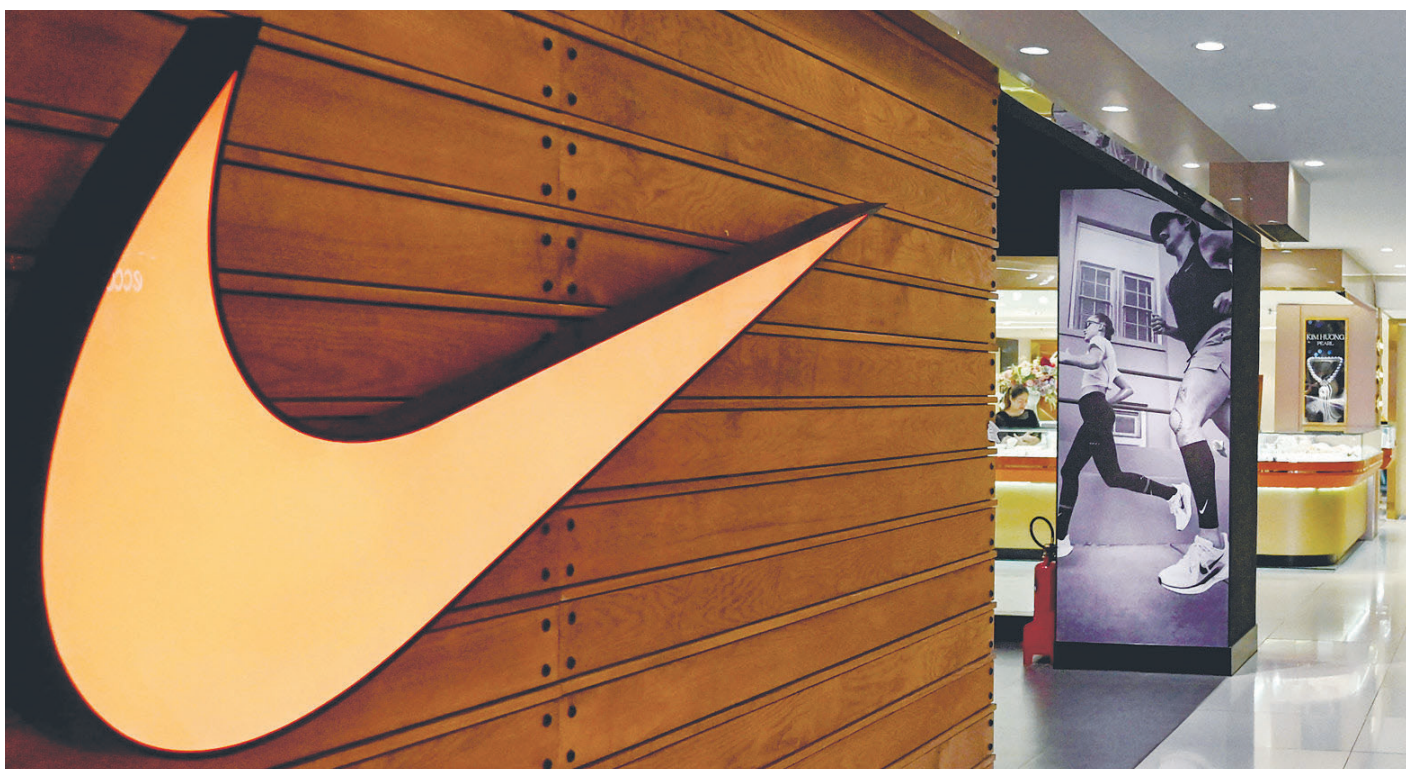
Under the deal Pfizer is to charge "Most Favoured Nation" pricing - matching the lowest price offered in other wealthy nations - to Medicaid, the US health insurance programme for low-income Americans.

The White House also said it would unveil a website - called TrumpRx - that would allow consumers to directly purchase some medications from manufacturers at discounted rates.

Like Trump, Pfizer CEO Albert Bourla heralded the deal as a great achievement, although a statement from the company was equally vague on specifics.

The company did say a "large majority" of "primary care treatments and some select specialty brands" could be offered at savings from 50% to 85%.

"We now have the certainty and stability we need on two critical fronts, tariffs and pricing, that have suppressed the industry's valuations to historic lows," said Bourla. - AFP



The Nike logo is seen at a shopping mall in Vietnamese capital Hanoi. - AFP/PICT

OpenAI launches Sora 2 with TikTok-style app

SAN FRANCISCO: OpenAI on Tuesday released Sora 2, its most advanced video generation model yet, alongside a TikTok-style social app that will let users insert themselves into AI-created scenes through a feature called "cameos".

The company behind ChatGPT described the release as a major leap forward in artificial intelligence's ability to create realistic video.

The system can now generate synchronised dialogue, sound effects, and physically accurate motion, according to the company.

"Sora 2 can do things that are exceptionally difficult - and in some cases outright impossible - for earlier video generation models," OpenAI said, pointing to examples like capturing Olympic gymnastics routines or basketball moves.

Unlike earlier systems that would "morph objects and deform reality" to fulfill text prompts, Sora 2 better follows

real-world physics, the company said.

Sora 2 replaces last year's Sora and represents the latest salvo in the AI arms race that began with ChatGPT's launch in 2022.

In video generation, OpenAI faces stiff competition from Google, Runway AI, and Midjourney, all of which offer apps that can produce short clips in seconds - tools that are either celebrated or feared as potential replacements for human-created content.

Perhaps more surprising than Sora 2 itself is the standalone social app, Sora.

The platform will allow users to appear in AI-generated videos with what OpenAI calls "remarkable fidelity" of both appearance and voice.

"We think a social app built around this 'cameos' feature is the best way to experience the magic of Sora 2," the company said.

The app is currently available by invitation only in the United States and Canada.

The Sora 2 video generator will initially be free with "generous limits", though usage will be constrained by the shortage of computing power needed for video generation.

On the app, users can share their creations in a feed similar to TikTok or Instagram Reels.

Meta, which owns Instagram, last week added its own AI video feed called "Vibes" to encourage users to experiment with image generation on its Meta AI app.

The rapid-fire release of increasingly powerful AI tools comes amid growing concerns about AI-generated content proliferation and the environmental toll of the massive computing power required to create it.

OpenAI also acknowledged the ongoing debate about social media's impact on mental health - including worries about "doomscrolling, addiction, and isolation" - and said it is implementing safeguards like user wellbeing checks and content controls. - AFP

MARKET ROUND-UP: OCT 1

1-Oct-2025

Bursa Malaysia

Trade Statistics

	Net (in RM million)	Participation
Retail	-98.73	19.74%
Institutions	-55.24	44.97%
Foreign	+153.98	35.29%

QR Code to register for 1-to-1 Coaching



Source: Bursa Malaysia, Berjaya Research
 Preliminary statistics (excluding trade amendments). For final data, please refer to www.bursamalaysia.com.

Inter-Pacific Securities Sdn. Bhd. is now rebranded as Berjaya Securities Sdn. Bhd.



Berjaya Securities (formerly known as Inter-Pacific Securities Sdn Bhd)

- Quick updates on market news, statistics & information
- Monthly Traders' Talk for directions & positioning
- Company coverage & trading insights
- One-to-One trading coaching (available upon request)

SUNBIZ presents a summary of the day's trading activity on Bursa Malaysia and other markets in an easy to digest format.

Sources: Bursa Malaysia, Bernama, shareinvestor.com and websites

DISCLAIMER: The data and reports are provided as a service to investors. Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

Bursa Indices

INDEX	CHANGE
FBMEMAS	12,055.70 +69.88
FBMKLCI	1,620.87 +8.99
CONSUMER PRODUCTS	517.23 +2.94
INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS	172.50 +1.04
CONSTRUCTION	332.25 +0.55
FINANCIAL SERVICES	18,409.70 +163.00
ENERGY	778.35 +1.73
TELECOMMUNICATIONS	492.94 +3.24
HEALTH CARE	1,604.47 +21.05
TRANSPORTATION	1,015.06 +6.36
PROPERTY	1,071.46 +1.41
PLANTATION	7,788.11 +8.53
FBMSHA	12,078.40 +61.85
FBMACE	5,203.28 +31.97
TECHNOLOGY	59.26 +1.61

TURNOVER: 2.480 bil **VALUE: RM2.489 bil**

FBM KLCI climbs 0.55%, tracks regional upswing

BURSA Malaysia ended higher yesterday, tracking gains across most regional equity markets, an analyst said.

At 5pm, the FBM KLCI rose 8.99 points, or 0.55%, to 1,620.87, compared with Tuesday's close of 1,611.88.

The benchmark index opened 0.74 of-a-point higher at 1,612.62, and moved between 1,612.62 and 1,624.04 throughout the session.

Market breadth was positive, with gainers outnumbering decliners 596 to 437, while 505 counters were unchanged, 1,019 untraded, and five suspended.

Turnover narrowed to 2.47 billion units worth RM2.48 billion, from 3.47 billion units valued at RM3.16 billion on Tuesday.

Rakuten Trade vice-president of equity research Thong Pak Leng said the FBM KLCI tracked regional markets, with most major Asian bourses finishing higher on strong gains in tech stocks amid optimism over the artificial intelligence (AI) trade.

China and Hong Kong were closed for National Day, with mainland markets to remain shut until the middle of next week.

Among heavyweights, IHH Healthcare jumped 39 sen to RM7.94, CIMB gained 11 sen to RM7.45, Hong Leong Bank increased 28 sen to RM20.80, 99 Speed Mart bagged seven sen to RM2.81, and Public Bank added three sen to RM4.36.

In active trade, Zetrix AI, VS Industry and Tanco edged up one sen each to 86 sen, 60 sen and 91 sen respectively, Tan Chong Motor rose 17.5 sen to 80.5 sen, and Malakoff advanced five sen to RM1.10.

Among the top losers, Time Dotcom and Tenaga fell 12 sen each to RM4.98 and RM13.10, respectively, Southern Acids and Malayan Cement lost 10 sen each to RM3.40 and RM6.93, while APM shaved six sen to RM3.12.

Top 20 Actives

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
ZETRIX	0.860	+0.010	+1.18	646,119
VS	0.600	+0.010	+1.70	574,895
TANCO	0.910	+0.010	+1.11	541,920
TCHONG	0.805	+0.175	+27.78	448,859
MALAKOF	1.100	+0.050	+4.76	441,426
PHARMA	0.285	-0.005	-1.72	403,020
NEXGBINA	0.095	-	-	299,375
MCLEAN	0.585	+0.095	+19.39	281,245
SNS	0.690	+0.035	+5.34	267,815
PERMAJU	0.010	-	-	251,896
EAH	0.005	-	-	248,170
BORNOIL	0.005	-	-	241,027
HHRG	0.100	-0.005	-4.76	215,396
IFCAMSC	0.350	+0.015	+4.48	213,548
IHH	7.940	+0.390	+5.17	211,654
JCY	0.375	+0.030	+8.70	209,512
MTOUCHE	0.050	-0.010	-16.67	196,477
TWL	0.025	-	-	193,411
NOTION	0.655	+0.030	+4.80	178,906
SIME	2.230	-0.050	-2.19	177,715

FBMKLCI Last Price



Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
NESTLE	97.400	+1.180	238
EUROSP	2.910	+0.510	2,852
IHH	7.940	+0.390	211,654
PETDAG	23.240	+0.300	3,912
HLBANK	20.800	+0.280	19,233
UNISEM	3.040	+0.220	32,785
VITROX	3.950	+0.200	133,531
AYER	7.680	+0.180	47
MPI	28.900	+0.180	1,551
TCHONG	0.805	+0.175	448,859
UWC	3.850	+0.170	42,075
F&N	27.400	+0.160	400
HLFG	17.380	+0.160	571
KUB	0.945	+0.155	62,521
FRONTKN	4.300	+0.150	83,671
KGB-WB	4.190	+0.140	3,303
CIMB	7.450	+0.110	132,536
IBRACO	1.360	+0.110	14,343
LSH	1.870	+0.110	59,216
ALLIANZ-PA	18.000	+0.100	411

Top 20 Gainers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
IHH-C51	0.155	+158.33	1,039
ARTRONIQ-WA	0.010	+100.00	8,227
SCBUILD	0.010	+100.00	94
SUPERMX-C4Z	0.010	+100.00	2,130
TECHBASE-WB	0.010	+100.00	9,478
ZENTECH	0.010	+100.00	11,991
FBMKLCI-CQ9	0.225	+80.00	53
HSI-PWLA	0.105	+75.00	1
KPJ-C23	0.035	+75.00	1,500
VANTNRG-WA	0.050	+66.67	85,756
IHH-C55	0.165	+50.00	310
MTRONIC	0.015	+50.00	13,542
MLAB-WD	0.015	+50.00	5,990
IHH-C57	0.215	+43.33	20,400
IHH-C52	0.235	+42.42	450
YTLPOWER-C83	0.105	+40.00	5,001
KERJAYA-C4	0.180	+38.46	759
UNISEM-C47	0.240	+37.14	119
IHH-C53	0.150	+36.36	2,002
IHH-C56	0.305	+35.56	3,888

World Stocks/Commodities

INDEX	CLOSING	DAILY CHANGE	DAILY CHANGE (%)
DJIA [US]	46,397.89	81.82	0.18
S&P 500 [US]	6,688.46	27.25	0.41
NASDAQ [US]	22,660.01	68.86	0.3
NYSE [US]	21,564.54	66.99	0.31
EURO STOXX 50 [EUR]	5,521.63	-8.33	-0.15
FTSE 100 [UK]	9,407.45	57.02	0.61
DAX [GER]	23,862.41	-18.31	-0.08
NIKKEI 225 [JPN]	44,550.85	-381.78	-0.85
TOPIX INDEX [JPN]	3,094.74	-42.86	-1.37
HANG SENG INDEX [HK]	26,855.56	232.68	0.87
CSI 300 [CHN]	4,640.69	20.64	0.45
MSCI ASIA PACIFIC	220.6	1.35	0.62
SHANGHAI SE COM [CHN]	3,882.78	20.25	0.52
KOSPI INDEX [SK]	3,455.83	31.23	0.91
SENSEX INDEX [IND]	80,839.38	571.76	0.71
ASX 200 [AUS]	8,845.66	-3.12	-0.04
ALL ORDINARIES INDX [AUS]	9,136.56	0.66	0.01
FBM KLCI	1,620.87	10.23	0.63
STRAITS TIMES INDEX [S'PORE]	4,317.12	16.96	0.39
WTI [US\$/BBL.]	62.13	-0.24	-0.38
BRENT [US\$/BBL.]	65.81	-0.22	-0.33
GOLD [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	3,918.70	45.5	1.17
SILVER [COMEX] [US\$/T OZ]	47.57	0.93	1.99
PLATINUM [US\$/T OZ]	1,593.07	17.38	1.11
COPPER [COMEX] [US CENTS/LB.]	486.15	0.5	0.1
COPPER 3MO [LME] [US\$/MT]	10,268.50	-145.5	-1.4
CORN [US CENTS/BU.]	413.5	-2	-0.48
WHEAT [US CENTS/BU.]	506	-2	-0.39
SOYBEAN OIL [CBOT] [US CENTS/LB.]	49.56	0.07	0.14
COCOA [ICE] [US\$/MT]	6,720.00	-29	-0.43
RUBBER [S'PORE] [US CENTS/KG]	167.4	-1.4	-0.83

As at 5:30pm, Oct 1

Top 20 Losers (By RM)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (RM)	VOLUME ('00)
TENAGA	13.100	-0.120	36,702
TIMECOM	4.980	-0.120	23,694
GENM-C3R	0.045	-0.105	1,000
MI-C37	0.045	-0.105	1,000
ECOWLD-C50	0.050	-0.100	500
MCEMENT	6.930	-0.100	3,554
SAB	3.400	-0.100	31
LHI-C33	0.065	-0.085	4,000
KLK-C40	0.070	-0.080	50
SLVEST-CW	0.070	-0.080	1,000
PMETAL-C2F	0.075	-0.075	1,000
RANHILL-CO	0.085	-0.065	1,000
SUNWAY-C50	0.085	-0.065	500
YINSON-C53	0.085	-0.065	200
APM	3.120	-0.060	67
CARLSBG	16.400	-0.060	1,395
HUMEIND	3.430	-0.060	1,947
KOSSAN-C87	0.090	-0.060	2,100
SUNCON	5.990	-0.060	24,981
KSL-CO	0.875	-0.055	149

Top 20 Losers (By %)

STOCKS	CLOSING (RM)	+/- (%)	VOLUME ('00)
HSI-PWJ7	0.005	-90.00	1,400
GCB-C19	0.020	-71.43	488
GENM-C3R	0.045	-70.00	1,000
MI-C37	0.045	-70.00	1,000
ECOWLD-C50	0.050	-66.67	500
TAKAFUL-C1	0.030	-62.50	3,400
LHI-C33	0.065	-56.67	4,000
KLK-C40	0.070	-53.33	50
SLVEST-CW	0.070	-53.33	1,000
PMETAL-C2F	0.075	-50.00	1,000
RANHILL-CO	0.085	-43.33	1,000
SUNWAY-C50	0.085	-43.33	500
YINSON-C53	0.085	-43.33	200
KOSSAN-C87	0.090	-40.00	2,100
FBMKLCI-HED	0.070	-39.13	2,000
EKOVEST-C73	0.020	-33.33	4
GENTINGC3S	0.010	-33.33	100
HARTA-C2X	0.010	-33.33	550
ITECH	0.020	-33.33	1,000
SINARAN-WB	0.010	-33.33	23,634

MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

SUNBIZ presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by **SunBiz Team**

DISCLAIMER: The information is extracted from stockbrokers' commentaries and research reports and do not represent the views or opinions of Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd. It is not a solicitation, recommendation or an offer to buy or sell the equities featured. Sun Media Corporation shall not be liable or responsible for any consequences resulting from usage of the information.

NCT Alliance partners Epicon for Batang Kali development

PETALING JAYA: NCT Alliance Bhd's wholly owned subsidiary NCT Noble Sdn Bhd, has entered into a Joint Development Agreement (JDA) with Epicon Land Sdn Bhd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Epicon Bhd, to jointly develop a freehold land in Batang Kali, Selangor, a previously abandoned property development project.

Through this collaboration, 876 units of single-storey terrace houses will be developed on a 72.14-acre parcel of freehold land with an estimated GDV of RM347.7 million. The project is envisaged to commence in Q4'26.

Executive chairman and group managing director Datuk Seri Yap Ngan Choy said "Our collaboration with Epicon Land represents a true win-win partnership, combining the complementary strengths of both organisations. By drawing on NCT's and Epicon Land's expertise, we are confident of delivering a development that creates long-term value for homebuyers and stakeholders. This partnership also reflects our shared commitment to ESG principles, ensuring the project not only meets today's needs but also builds a greener, more resilient community for the future."

The partnership reinforces both companies' strategic positions in Malaysia's residential property sector, with NCT Alliance contributing its proven expertise in design innovation, marketing and sales execution, value engineering, and project delivery to ensure quality and timely completion, while also leveraging its strategic landbank. Epicon Land, supported by Epicon Bhd's resources, contributes its development expertise in growth corridors, creating synergy to unlock the site's full potential.

Under the agreement, NCT Noble will receive up to RM72.1 million, comprising repayment of land costs and profit-sharing.

Ringgit higher for third day amid US shutdown uncertainty

THE ringgit closed higher against the greenback yesterday, extending gains for the third consecutive session as the US dollar weakened after the American federal government shut down begun yesterday.

The shutdown will see a delay in the release of economic data, including the US nonfarm payrolls (NFP) report due this Friday.

At 6pm, the local note climbed to 4.2045/2095 against the greenback compared with Tuesday's close of 4.2050/2090.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid said the NFP report on Friday could be delayed, and will have an impact on traders as they may not have the latest data points to form their opinion. "The US government shutdown (has caused) uncertainties to heighten, and that is negative for the US dollar," he told Bernama.

At the close, the ringgit was mostly lower against a basket of major currencies.

It appreciated to 4.9327/9386 versus the euro from 4.9405/9452 at Tuesday's close, but slipped to 5.6605/6672 against the British pound from 5.6532/6586, and weakened to 2.8561/8597 against the Japanese yen from 2.8420/8447.

The local note was also traded lower against Asean currencies.

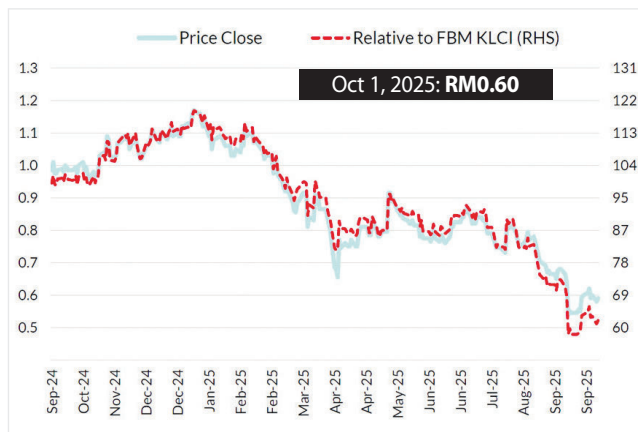
It dropped to 3.2623/2665 vis-à-vis the Singapore dollar from 3.2604/2638 at Tuesday's close, depreciated to 12.9929/13.0128 against the Thai baht from 12.9744/9927, and inched down against the Indonesian rupiah to 252.7/253.1 from 252.3/252.6 previously.

The ringgit eased versus the Philippine peso to 7.23/7.24 from 7.22/7.24.

Exchange Rates			
FOREIGN CURRENCY	SELLING TT/OD	BUYING TT	BUYING OD
1 US Dollar	4.2780	4.1330	4.1230
1 Australian Dollar	2.8330	2.7190	2.7030
1 Brunei Dollar	3.3100	3.2070	3.1990
1 Canadian Dollar	3.0650	2.9800	2.9680
1 Euro	5.0190	4.8570	4.8370
1 New Zealand Dollar	2.4810	2.3900	2.3740
1 Singapore Dollar	3.3100	3.2070	3.1990
1 Sterling Pound	5.7450	5.5640	5.5440
1 Swiss Franc	5.3980	5.1690	5.1540
100 UAE Dirham	117.6000	111.5100	111.3100
100 Bangladesh Taka	3.5800	3.3350	3.1350
100 Chinese Renminbi	N/A	N/A	N/A
100 Danish Krone	68.9200	63.4300	63.2300
100 Hongkong Dollar	55.4300	52.6800	52.4800
100 Indian Rupee	4.8900	4.5900	4.3900
100 Indonesian Rupiah	0.0265	0.0240	0.0190
100 Japanese Yen	2.8950	2.7910	2.7810
100 New Taiwan Dollar	15.1000	N/A	N/A
100 Norwegian Krone	43.8600	40.3600	40.1600
100 Pakistan Rupee	1.5400	1.4300	1.2300
100 Philippine Peso	7.4400	7.0100	6.8100
100 Qatar Riyal	118.4200	112.4200	112.2200
100 Saudi Riyal	115.1000	109.2600	109.0600
100 South Africa Rand	25.6300	23.1400	22.9400
100 Sri Lanka Rupee	1.4500	1.3300	1.1300
100 Swedish Krona	46.7500	42.5900	42.3900
100 Thai Baht	13.7300	12.1800	11.7800

Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama

V.S. Industry Bhd Buy. Target price: RM0.78



Source: Bloomberg

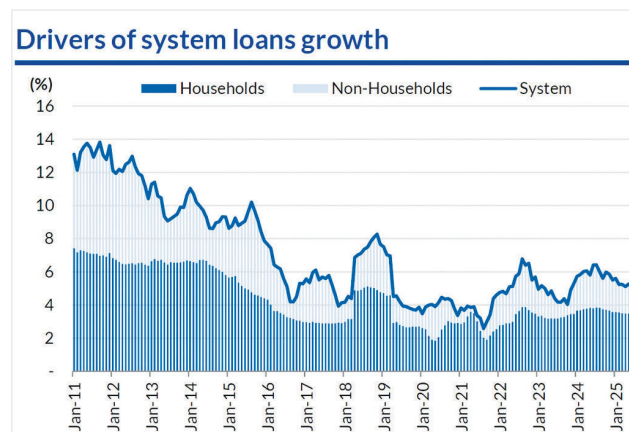
CORE net profit of RM54 million (-73% YoY) met only 73% and 50% of our and consensus' forecasts. This could be attributed to lower-than-expected profit margins. Post results, we cut FY26 and FY27 earnings by 5% and 10% to factor in the impact of more cost-down demand from key customers, and roll out FY28 (+20%) numbers.

YoY, FY25 revenue fell 11% to RM3.8 billion, with sales volumes negatively impacted by the disruptions that arose from US' reciprocal tariff actions. Consequently, FY25 GPM narrowed by 3.1ppts to 6.1%, dragged by the lower production utilisation rates, start-up costs at its Philippines operations, and an aggressive cost-down request by a key customer to share the new tariff burden. As a result, FY25 core net profit slumped 73% to RM54 million.

QoQ, Q4'25 revenue dipped 6% to RM859 million as key customers opted to defer their order shipments ahead of the final tariff decision on Aug 1. This primarily caused VSI to incur gross losses, which correspondingly swung into a core net loss of RM16 million. We anticipate an immediate earnings rebound in Q1'26 on a volume recovery spurred by favourable year-end seasonality and new product launches by key customers. The latter should translate to higher capacity offtake and reduced losses (FY25: RM46 million) for its 60%-owned subsidiary HT Press.

Downside risks to our recommendation include weaker-than-expected global consumer demand and major hiccups in new production operations. BUY with RM0.78 TP. – **RHB Research, Oct 1**

Banks Neutral



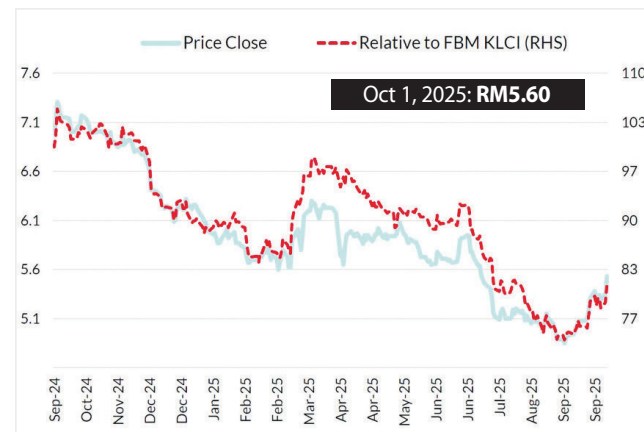
Source: Company data, RHB

NOTABLY, non-household loans growth posted a sequential acceleration to +5% YoY, vs +4.7% YoY in July 2025. Most of this growth was driven by the finance (+21% YoY, flat MoM), transport & communications (+11% YoY, -1% MoM) and wholesale & retail trade (+3% YoY, flat MoM) sectors. For household loans (+5.7% YoY, +0.5% MoM), growth primarily came from residential mortgages (+6% YoY, +1% MoM) and auto loans (+7% YoY, +1% MoM), whereas personal loans (+3% YoY, flat MoM) trailed the system average. YTD annualised loans growth is currently at +4.3%, which is just slightly short of our unchanged 4.5-5.0% forecast for 2025.

On a cumulative basis, system loan applications and approvals remain robust, gaining 5% and 4% YoY respectively for 8M'25. While disbursements remain muted (8M'25 system disbursements declined 7% YoY), the banks had cited optimism at stronger drawdowns to come, particularly from the non-household segment. Indeed, the segment's YTD loan approvals are up 7% YoY, implying a healthy build-up in the loan pipeline to be drawn down towards the year end, especially with the resolution of trade agreements with the US.

Total deposits gained 4% YoY (MoM: flat), with CASA deposits (+6% YoY, +2% MoM) once again outpacing growth in fixed and other deposits (+3% YoY, -1% MoM). The system CASA ratio rose 0.4ppts YoY to 31.4%, and was stable MoM. Interestingly, we note that fixed deposit rates in Aug 2025 fell 24-30bps vs Jun 2025 levels ie prior to July's overnight policy rate (OPR) cut, which potentially reflects the banks' pre-emptive deposit rate cuts prior to the OPR cut to manage NIM. – **RHB Research, Oct 1**

AEON Credit Service (M) Bhd Buy. Target price: RM6.70



Source: Bloomberg

RECALL that ACSM's collection ratios showed a strong rise in July and Aug 2025, partly a result of the group's targeted initiatives to raise collection productivity. As such, management sees an improvement in credit costs ahead, coming from: i) Better recoveries and/or reversal from accounts that went impaired between April and Jun 2025; and ii) smaller slippages of performing accounts. Post-results, we raise our FY26 credit cost assumption to 4.3% (previously 3.8%), implying a 2H'26 charge of 3.5% (1H'26: 5%).

In early Aug 2025, Aeon Bank launched its maiden business banking products, comprising of current accounts and cash management solutions. The bank has already onboarded over 180 customers onto the platform – most of which are existing merchants of ACSM – with a target to raise this to 1k customers by Feb 2026. In the pipeline are several new product launches, including working capital and term financing for businesses (slated for Nov 2025 launch), business term deposits (Nov 2025) and supply chain financing (Mar 2026). Management sees operational losses peaking in FY26 (guidance for ACSM's share: RM80-90 million; 1H'26: RM34 million), as the shift in focus to asset gathering from product rollouts from FY27 onwards should help to lift the bank's financing income.

On Sept 29, ACSM undertook a RM500 million social loan from MUFG Bank (Malaysia). Proceeds from the loan are to be directed specifically for ACSM to extend financing towards the underserved communities eg lower-income households (RM2.5k monthly income and below) and small businesses in new growth areas.

BUY with new RM6.70 TP. – **RHB Research, Oct 1**



Tunes of love

Malaysian songstress lives American dream - P22



WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY

Technology and social media

TUESDAY

Family and parenting

WEDNESDAY

Fashion and beauty

THURSDAY

Home and living

FRIDAY

Travel and leisure

SATURDAY

Food and beverage

INSIDE

P23

Tips for buying perfect dining table, chairs

P25

Four top spots light up for Mid-Autumn Festival

P26

BCL celebrates hope, eternal love in concert



Soon is currently working on her first full-length album. – PIC BY SAVANNAH GRIMM

BY JOHN TAN

EVEN before songwriting, lyrics have always mattered to 29-year-old Amrita Soon. The lass from Seremban would obsessively learn the lyrics of all her favourite songs, memorising them by hand-writing the lyrics in her notebooks.

“Subconsciously, I was learning songwriting by doing that. The biggest influences of my music were Taylor Swift, Ed Sheeran and Yuna. They were a big influence for me in finding my own sound,” Soon told *theSun*.

Similar to her idols, Soon has displayed a great deal of emotional depth in her lyrics since her emergence. Telling tales of falling in love, heartbreak and growing up, her songs are carefully crafted to tug at your heartstrings.

Her latest song *Together* reflects this, delicately conveying the joys of love. But the excitement extends beyond its artistry too. *Together* was recently featured as a soundtrack to Hollywood’s latest romantic comedy *Worth the Wait*.

Boasting an ensemble of star-studded cast, the film centres around multiple strangers whose fates intertwine as they navigate budding love, confront profound loss and encounter old flames. Still in awe, Soon elaborates on the joyful experience of the feature and her plans for the remainder of 2025.



Soon has written several musical scores aside from original music. – PIC FROM PHOTO FOREST



Worth the Wait features several local landmarks. – PIC BY KHEE ANG YEE

Love prevails

➤ Amrita Soon on penning soundtrack for romantic comedy *Worth the Wait*

How special was it for you to be a part of the movie?

It was a pleasant surprise because I did not read my emails properly. I did not know it got placed until the movie was about to come out. I am so grateful to have a song in an international movie, and it is even more special because the film features Malaysia as well.

How did the collaboration happen?

Actually, it is a funny story because it took me a while to realise. When I

saw the email labelled *Worth the Wait*, I wondered what was worth the wait. Only after a few exchanges with the people involved in the music of the film did I realise the song was in the movie.

Could you elaborate more on the meaning of *Together*?

It is about the love of family or people who care about you and your love for them. They are always with you, even if you are apart. It is about the warmth in your heart when you look back on fond memories. When I wrote it, I thought about my siblings and parents, and what it felt when they were back home while I was travelling.

Did you envision it to be a soundtrack when you first wrote the song?

I wrote this song with Sarah Peterson, who is based in the US. We write together on Zoom regularly and we did start writing this with the hope of it being in a film or TV show someday. We also wanted it to be a song I could release.

Is the process different when writing songs for movies and your own releases?

It depends on the project. For *Worth the Wait*, we wrote with a movie scene in mind and put out the song first as my own release. For the movie *Rain Town*, I co-wrote the song with



Actors Ross Butler (right) and Lana Condor are the movie’s protagonists. – PIC FROM INSTAGRAM @WORTH THE WAIT

Chris M. Yong and we wrote it specifically from the character’s perspective, following the theme and storyline. The writing process is different, and I love it because I get to paint with different colours when writing from different perspectives.

Are you working on releasing an EP or a full-length album?

Yes! I am excited because my first full-length album is coming together. We are halfway through recording it and getting ready to release the next two singles. A music video is also in the works, and that would come out early next year.

Excited and nervous!

How do you hope to end the year?

It has been pretty busy lately. So I hope to end the year by spending time with family and friends. I have a tiny Christmas tree that we put presents under. Staying home sounds good.

Will you be performing live anytime soon?

There will be one showcase this month. After that, I will be going on tour with two other artistes, Su San and Noel Ng. I will be playing shows in a few cities across Taiwan.



For bigger spaces, a rectangular table gives presence and allows for larger gatherings.



The right dining table and chairs can change how a home feels.

Guide to planning dining table purchase

► Budget, space, seating needs should be taken into consideration

THE dining table is more than a place to eat. It is where a family gathers for meals, conversations and those long catch-up sessions. Choosing the right dining table and chairs can change how your whole home feels. Here are five practical things to think about, written by someone who spends a lot of time thinking about furniture and how Malaysians live at home.

Size and proportion

Always start with measurements. Measure the dining area first and leave at least 90cm around the table for chairs and easy movement. If space is tight, consider a round table because it uses floor area more efficiently and helps traffic flow. For bigger spaces, a longer rectangular table gives presence and allows for larger gatherings. Remember the size of your usual guest list. A table that fits your daily life will be used more often, and that is the whole point.

Design and style

Match the table with the mood of your home. A modern living space can take a sleek table with simple lines. A more traditional home may suit a table with classic legs and warm wood tones. The dining set should complement surrounding furniture so the room feels cohesive and not like it was assembled from different eras. If the rest of your home is neutral, the dining table is a good place to add personality with texture or a subtle colour.

Material and finish

Choose materials with the way you live in mind. Solid wood feels warm and ages beautifully but will show character over time. Veneer offers consistent looks and is easier on the wallet. For busy families, look for surfaces that resist stains and are simple to clean. Finishes matter a lot. A natural matte finish hides small scratches better than a high gloss surface and darker grains bring a cosy, grounded feel to the room.

Seating comfort and ergonomics

Dining is more than a quick *makan* session. Comfortable chairs encourage guests to stay longer. Pay attention to seat height and depth. The standard seat height works for most tables but always test it in person when possible. Chairs with wrapped arms look elegant but may restrict movement, so consider armless options for smaller spaces. Cushioning should be supportive, not just soft. Good ergonomics will bring many more memorable meals.

Practicality and longevity

Think beyond aesthetics. Do you need an extendable table for festive seasons or a compact set for daily life? Is storage useful for dining linens and tableware? Consider build quality and joinery because how a table is made affects how long it will last. Investing a little more up front in a well-built table and chairs will save money in the long run and keep your home looking cared for.

Choosing a dining table is part design choice and part life planning. It should fit your daily routine, welcome guests and age with charm.

This article is contributed by Fella Design.



Match the table with the mood of your home.



Leave at least 90cm around the table for easy movement.



Comfortable chairs encourage guests to stay longer.



SMART home appliances maker Midea has unveiled its latest Insta-Fit Master Series and Laundry Suite in Malaysia. The debut underscores Midea's vision of appliances that fit seamlessly into modern homes while supporting healthier lifestyles through smarter design and advanced purification technologies.

"Homeowners today are looking for appliances that blend seamlessly into their spaces while delivering exceptional performance. The Insta-Fit Master Series and Laundry Suite are designed to do exactly that, helping families keep their food fresher for longer and facilitating effortless laundry care, all wrapped in a sleek, stylish design. We want families to enjoy everyday convenience without ever compromising on style," said Midea Malaysia managing director Mark Tam.

No more compromise between function and form

Both the Insta-Fit Master Series and Laundry Suite embody Midea's philosophy of enabling convenience and adaptability, showing appliances can complement a home's identity rather than dictate it.

"As kitchens and living spaces become more open and integrated, appliances are increasingly expected to disappear into the design rather than disrupt it. The Insta-Fit Master Series, with its seamless cabinetry integration and the ultra-thin Midea Laundry Suite reflect this shift perfectly, proving that functionality never has to come at the expense of aesthetics," said iN Design Lab founder Iko In.

Refrigerator designed for health, not just storage

The new Midea Insta-Fit Master Series redefines modern refrigeration with a true perfect slot-in fit. At just 600mm depth with 4mm clearance, it blends seamlessly into cabinetry with zero installation required. Designed for today's minimalist kitchens, it features a Shadow Grey finish, GlowTech-illuminated handle and durable, scratch-resistant surfaces that stay clean and fingerprint-free. With a generous Gross 620L capacity, the fridge offers 90° accessible drawers and a flexible flip-tray system for effortless storage, all brightly lit by an LED light wall.

Beyond style, it delivers breakthrough freshness technologies. V-Tech soft-freeze drawers preserve meat and fish for up to seven days without defrosting, while IPL Purify sterilises packaged food in just three minutes and PST+ Plasma Sterilisation eliminates odours in only nine minutes. Paired with the SmartHome App, users can manage temperature, track energy use, receive food expiry reminders and run self-diagnostics, all from their phone, making the Insta-Fit Master Series as intelligent as it is elegant. By keeping food fresher for longer and removing harmful bacteria, the fridge helps families prepare healthier home-cooked meals with confidence.

The Insta-Fit Master Series has been recognised by the Malaysia Book of Records as the first refrigerator in the market to feature PST+ plasma sterilisation with the highest level of PST Purification Virus Elimination System as well as odour purification, setting a new benchmark for disinfection, virus and odour removal in the industry.

Midea debuts Laundry Suite, Insta-Fit Master Series

➤ Designed for modern homes, new range combines seamless integration, advanced performance, purification



From left: In, Midea REF overseas marketing director James Hu, Midea Malaysia deputy general manager Peter Jiang, Midea REF overseas regional director Frank Huang and Midea country product manager of laundry division Ada Liu launching the Midea showroom at iN Design Lab.

Smarter laundry in slimmer form

The new Laundry Suite redefines home care with its sleek, ultra-thin all-in-one washer-dryer combo that fits seamlessly into standard cabinetry while offering a strikingly unified design. Its extra-large drum handles up to 10kg + 8kg of washing and drying, ensuring even bulky items like curtains are cleaned with ease.

A central 115cm colourful touchscreen puts both washing and drying functions at eye level, making everyday use simple and intuitive. Powered by advanced Turbo technology, the Laundry Suite can complete a wash-and-dry cycle in just 35 minutes, while its heat-pump drying system delivers gentle care at



From left: Malaysia Book of Records deputy general manager Aaron Bong, COO Jwan Heah, Jiang and Huang commemorating the Insta-Fit Master Series's recognition as the first refrigerator in the country with the highest level of PST Purification Virus Elimination System.

42°C with significant energy savings.

Beyond performance, it also prioritises hygiene with UV sterilisation, steam cleaning, mite removal and self-cleaning functions, giving families fresh, hygienic laundry every time.

To mark the debut, visitors to the iN Design Lab can see the Insta-Fit Master Series and Laundry Suite in immersive and interactive real-life home setups, test key features and discover how the appliances adapt to different layouts and needs. More than a display, the showroom will act as a dedicated design hub for both consumers and interior professionals, showcasing how Midea's smart technologies seamlessly integrate into diverse lifestyles and home aesthetics.

Pricing and availability

The new Insta-Fit Master Series refrigerator and Midea Laundry Suite will be available in Malaysia on special offer until Nov 30, 2025, as follows:

- Insta-Fit 620L French Door Refrigerator MDRF705BIE70Y (RRP: RM6,699, Promo Price: RM6,099 + GWP Microwave Oven EGP032MX-PS0F worth RM689)
- Insta-Fit 620L Four Door Refrigerator MDRF706BIE70Y (RRP: RM6,499, Promo Price: RM5,899 + GWP Microwave Oven EGP032MX-PS0F worth RM689)
- Laundry Suite (RRP: RM7,339)



The showroom demonstrates how Midea's smart technologies can seamlessly integrate into diverse lifestyles and home aesthetics.



Jiang showcasing a Laundry Suite appliance.

MID-AUTUMN MALL DECOR



Moonlight Elegance at The Exchange TRX.

THE EXCHANGE TRX

The Exchange TRX has transformed into a luminous haven with its Moonlight Elegance celebration.

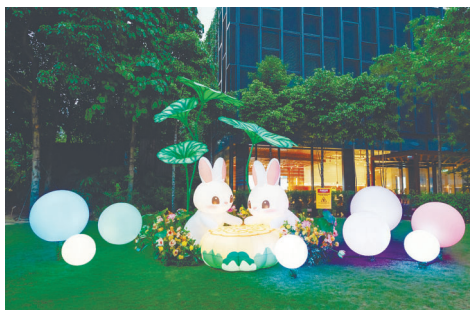
Across TRX City Park, Dining Terrace and Market Lane, glowing lanterns cast a golden warmth that turns the mall into a festive wonderland.

Every corner is designed to echo reunion and tradition with decor that blends classic motifs and contemporary style.

Shoppers are invited to soak in the serene beauty of lanterns that symbolise guidance and togetherness under the full moon.

The Concourse Level becomes the heart of the celebration, where the Mid-Autumn Bazaar runs until next Monday, offering a refined backdrop for seasonal delights.

On Saturday, the Lantern Parade takes centre



Glowing lanterns turn the mall into a wonderland.

stage, filling the mall with glowing processions that symbolise harmony and hope.

The experience is both a visual feast and a cultural reminder that under one moon, families and communities are united.



Mascots and cultural costumes to liven up the scene at Resorts World Genting.

RESORTS WORLD GENTING

High above the city, Resorts World Genting brings Mid-Autumn to life with decor that sparkles against the mountain air.

Until next Monday, Gohtong Way and Central Park Gardens are bathed in light, where lanterns glow in a dazzling display of colour. Walking beneath these illuminated arches feels like stepping into a storybook, with the decorations embodying reunion and festivity under the moon's watchful gaze.

From tomorrow to Sunday, the celebration crescendos with lantern parades winding through the resort, filling the highlands with processions of glowing symbols of unity.

Beloved Mid-Autumn figures such as Chang'e, Hou Yi and the Moon Bunnies appear alongside the decor, adding layers of legend and meaning to the setting.



Moon Bunnies appear alongside the decor.



Pavilion Bukit Jalil's Swoon Over Mid-Autumn.

PAVILION BUKIT JALIL

At Pavilion Bukit Jalil, the Swoon Over Mid-Autumn festival has filled the Centre Court with an explosion of colour and cultural symbolism.

The decor features lantern installations that glimmer like jewels, each one representing reunion, hope and the bonds between families.

Cultural performances and interactive workshops bring the space alive, turning the atrium into a celebration of both heritage and artistry.

The lantern parade here becomes the crown jewel of the decor, as glowing lanterns wind across the mall in a procession that captures the essence of Mid-Autumn unity.

Shoppers can also indulge in a mooncake showcase of more than 20 varieties, beautifully packaged and displayed beneath the lantern glow.



A celebration of both heritage and artistry.

Paired with premium teas, the decor and delicacies work in harmony to encourage reflection, slowing down and cherishing togetherness.



Sunway Velocity Mall's Moonlit Reverie.

SUNWAY VELOCITY MALL

Sunway Velocity Mall takes a cosmic twist on tradition with its Moonlit Reverie celebration, running until next Monday.

The Main Atrium has been transformed into a celestial dreamscape, where pastel-hued lanterns hang like constellations and oversized lotus blooms glow with radiant light.

Each lotus symbolises purity and resilience, while the lanterns above reimagine the stars as symbols of reunion, reminding shoppers that no matter the distance, hearts remain connected under the same sky.

At the centre of the decor stands a golden moon gate encircled by clouds, flanked by playful moon rabbits among lotus flowers.

The installation evokes both folklore and festivity, embodying joy, prosperity and the timeless story of the moon's presence in Mid-Autumn lore.

Even the floor has been painted to resemble



The installation evokes both folklore and festivity.

rippling galaxies in shades of blue, pink and lilac, giving visitors the sensation of walking across the Milky Way itself.

The decor is more than festive embellishment. It is a visual poem about unity, compassion and shared humanity, encapsulating the meaning of Mid-Autumn.



BCL (centre) giving the audience a mesmerising performance.

The concert is a celebration of hope and renewal for the singer.

BCL shines in soulful 'Eternal Love Timeless Romance' concert

► Artiste reflects on life's journey with fans

TWO years ago, popular Indonesian singer Bunga Citra Lestari (BCL) mesmerised her audience with a two-hour showcase at the Plenary Hall, Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

This year, she recreated the magic at her BCL: Eternal Love Timeless Romance concert at the same venue, which 2,000 fans attended. This time, however, the concert carried a deeper meaning - it was not only soulful but a celebration of hope and renewal for the 42-year-old singer.

Among the songs she sang was *Wanita Terbahagia*, which she dedicated to her late husband Ashraf

Sinclair, who passed away in February 2020.

"Ashraf was not only my husband but also my friend and partner in crime. We fought for each other and sometimes, we fought with each other. For 12 years, we stayed with each other. Losing him was really tough," she said, her voice breaking with emotion. The hall fell into silence.

Yet in that poignant moment, BCL reminded her fans that loss does not mark the end, but instead it illuminates the path to carry on.

BCL's setlist included *Pernah Muda*, *Menghapus Jejakmu*, *Memilih Dia* and *Kecewa*, interwoven with reflections on her life's journey and a new chapter with her husband Tiko Aryawardhana.

The song *Memulai Kembali*, the lyrics of which were about opening her heart again, created a romantic

mood in the hall.

Describing herself as fortunate, BCL said her marriage to Tiko in December 2023 did not distance her from Ashraf's family. On the contrary, they remained a source of strength and support throughout her life's transitions.

"My husband embraces Ashraf's family. I am now like a daughter to Ummi (Ashraf's mother) and Tiko is her son-in-law," she said with a radiant smile that melted the hearts of her fans.

BCL later surprised the audience with a special guest appearance by Malaysian star Yuna. Together, they performed their hit collaboration *Watak Utama*, released last year.

True to her promise of delivering a truly special evening, BCL even invited two fans on stage to share their own love stories.

She then joined forces with guest

artiste Jaclyn Victor for a powerful rendition of *Cinta*, their vocals blending seamlessly to electrify the hall.

The night continued with a duet alongside Indonesian singer Fajar Noor for *Aku dan Dirimu*.

The show drew to a close at exactly 11.43pm with *Badai Telah Berlalu*, as her fans rose to their feet in thunderous applause, reluctant to let go of the magical night.

The concert will be remembered not only for its music but also for the singer's soulful voice, as well as her emotional life journey and strong belief that the hope to keep moving forward has no end. - Bernama



BCL.



The concert is not just soul-stirring but it also lights up new hope in the life of BCL.



Foreground, front left: Yuna and BCL performing their hit collaboration *Watak Utama*. - ALLS PICS FROM BERNAMA



BCL (left) and Jaclyn Victor (right) singing *Cinta*.



SCAN ME
Classified
 THURSDAY
 OCT 2, 2025
 T: 03-7784 6688
 F: 03-7785 2625
 E: sunconnects@thesundaily.com

170 **Houses to Let**

RUMAH / TANAH UNTUK DISEWA



LOKASI : PADANG JAWA LOT 626 & LOT 1416 (SHAH ALAM)
 BERMINAT SILA HUNBUNGI KAMI :
ENCIK FAREK : 016 - 690 6609
MS SHELLEY : 018 - 323 3518

322 **Notices**

NOR AZIAH PROPERTIES SDN. BHD.
 Registration No.: 199501040072 (369275-A)
 (Incorporated in Malaysia)

Members' Voluntary Winding Up

NOTICE OF FINAL MEETING UNDER SECTION 459(1) OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016

Notice is hereby given that the Final General Meeting of the members of the company will be held at Lot 35384, Jalan Sultan Nazrin Shah (Jalan Gopeng), 31350 Ipoh, Perak on 3rd November, 2025 at 10.00 am for the purpose of receiving the accounts and reports of the Liquidator in relation to the winding up of the Company in pursuant to Section 459(1) of the Companies Act, 2016 the books and papers of the company and or subsequent to the commencement of the company be destroyed accordingly.

CHOONG MUN PHIN
 Liquidator
 Date: 2nd October, 2025

Advertise with us & connect to our urban readers.

KLANG VALLEY PENANG | KEDAH PERAK | PERLIS PAHANG | KELANTAN TERENGGANU
 MS. Shoba / MS. Balqish
 TEL: 03-7784 8888
 WHATSAPP: 018 261 6626

MALACCA MR. Rajah
 TEL: 012-628 2844
 FAX: 06-764 2051

JOHOR BAHRU MS. Anne Lim
 TEL: 013-770 6699
 FAX: 07-355 5549

322 **Notices**

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF HARGA INDUSTRIES SDN. BHD. (IN LIQUIDATION) [REGISTRATION NO.: 196801000148 (7754-A)]

NOTICE OF APPOINTMENT OF LIQUIDATOR PURSUANT TO FORM NO. 20 (Rule 46) OF COMPANIES (WINDING UP) RULES 1972

By an order of the High Court Post Winding-Up Order No.: WA-28PW-31-01/2025 made on the 13th day of August 2025, I, Chiang Teng Guan of Messrs. Rodgers Reidy & Co. (NF: 2243), K-3A-09, No. 2 Jalan Solaris, Solaris Mont' Kiara, 50480 Kuala Lumpur have been appointed as Liquidator of the above-named company.

Dated this 2nd day of October, 2025

CHIANG TENG GUAN
 Liquidator

NOTICE TO ALL CREDITORS PURSUANT TO SECTION 525 OF COMPANIES ACT 2016

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of Harga Industries Sdn. Bhd. (In Liquidation) ("the Company") having a claim present or future, certain or contingent, that: -

If you have not submitted your claim yet, you are required to submit an affidavit verifying debt together with all certified true copy documents to substantiate your claim to the Liquidator of the Company at the following address not later than **5.00 pm., Friday, 31 October 2025:**

Address : The Liquidator
 Harga Industries Sdn. Bhd. (In Liquidation)
 c/o Messrs. Rodgers Reidy & Co. (NF:2243)
 K-3A-09, No. 2 Jalan Solaris
 Solaris Mont' Kiara
 50480 Kuala Lumpur

Telephone No : (03) 6204 0928
 Fax No : (03) 6204 0428

Failure to submit abovementioned affidavit to the Liquidator by the stipulated date can result in your claim being excluded from the benefit of any distributions made before the debt or claims are proved and from objecting to the distributions.

By Order of the Liquidator
CHIANG TENG GUAN
 Dated this 2nd day of October, 2025

Note:

- Please do not submit an affidavit if you have submitted once before.
- If you have submitted an affidavit but have not received any response from the Liquidator, please contact them at the above address.
- Creditors who have not responded to the Liquidator's request for further documents and/or particulars relating to their claims are reminded to submit the further documents and/or particulars without delay or risk having their claims rejected.

PA-38-1123-08/2025
PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN
 DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI PULAU PINANG
 PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO : PA-38-1123-08/2025

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965
 Dan
 Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No:0799SC2021005883 (bertarik: 17/03/2021) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah HAKMILIK STRATA NO. HAKMILIK PAJAKAN NEGERI 8423/M1/6/133, Lot 2728, Mukim Bandar Tanjung Pinang, Seksyen 1, Daerah Timor Laut, Pulau Pinang
 Dan
 Dalam perkara mengenai Aturan 83 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012

ANTARA
PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD (No. Syarikat: 197301001433) ...Plaintif
 DAN
TAN KHANG CHUN (No. Kad Pengenalan: 880419355539) ...Defendan

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaya di PULAU PINANG mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarik 15 Ogos 2024 dan 22 September 2025, adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa Timbalan Pendatdar/Penolong Kanan Pendatdar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan

AKAN MENJUAL SECARA LELONG AWAM
 Pada Hari Isnin, 27 Oktober 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,
 SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG, KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR

NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua langganan, bebanan serta mengenai pasti dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.

Sila layari <https://lelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb>

BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:
 No. Hakmilik : HAKMILIK STRATA NO. HAKMILIK PAJAKAN NEGERI 8423/M1/6/133
 No. lot : Lot 2728
 Mukim / Daerah / Negeri : Bandar Tanjung Pinang, Seksyen 1 / Timor Laut / Pulau Pinang
 Pegangan : Hakmilik Pajak
 No. Petak/No. Tingkat/ No. Bangunan : 133 / 6 / M1
 Keluasan Tanah : 61.0000000000 kaki persegi / 61.0000000000 meter persegi
 Pemilik Berdaftar : TAN KHANG CHUN
 Syarat Nyata : Petak ini hendaklah digunakan untuk tujuan rumah pangsa sahaja
 Sekatan Kepentingan : Tanah yang dimilikinya tidak boleh dipindah milik, cagar pajak, pajakan kecil atau melupuskan tanpa kebenaran Pihak Berkuasa Negeri terlebih dahulu
 Bebanan / Lain-Lain : Dijelaskan kepada Public Islamic Bank Berhad melalui Gadaian Perserahan No. 0799SC2021005883 didaftarkan pada 17-03-2021
 Kawasan Rizab :
 Kaveat : Kaveat Persendirian oleh Public Islamic Bank Berhad melalui Nombor Pers 0799B2021000280 yang didaftarkan pada 08-01-2021

LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH:
 Hartanah tersebut adalah sebuah flat berbilik tiga yang beralamat pos di 7A-5-18, Jalan Seri Tanjung Pinang, 10470, Georgetown, Pulau Pinang.
HARGA RIZAB:
 Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas "sepertimana sedia ada" tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak **RM 196,830.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: SATU RATUS SEMBILAN PULUH ENAM RIBU LAPAN RATUS TIGA PULUH SAHAJA)** dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendepositkan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk Bank Draft di atas nama **PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA** sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada **PUBLIC ISLAMIC BANK BERHAD** dalam tempoh seratus dua puluh (120) hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

Firma Guaman : **WONG & LOH**
 Alamat : **NO. 44, CANTONMENT ROAD, 10350, PG, MY**
 No. Telefon : **04-2286989**
 No. Fax : **04-2287989**
 No. Rujukan : **GT/LYK/PH/VN/PIBB/L/2024/025**

Sinner claims China Open title

World No. 2 back to his best in easy win over Tien

JANNIK SINNER was back to his best in a 6-2, 6-2 victory over American teenager Learner Tien in yesterday's China Open final, as the world No. 2 picked up his third title of the year and 21st tour-level trophy overall.

Carlos Alcaraz's Japan Open title on Tuesday and Sinner's triumph marked the first time since 2020 that the world No. 1 and two both claimed trophies in the same week after Novak Djokovic (Dubai) and Rafa Nadal (Acapulco) managed the feat.

"It's a very, very special place for me," Sinner said during the trophy presentation in Beijing.

"My team, thanks for understanding and working with me. Not all the team is here, hopefully the rest are watching from home.

"We'll try to improve and push for more and see what the rest of the season looks like. But I'm very happy to share this (trophy) with all of

Jannik Sinner.
 - AFP/PPIC

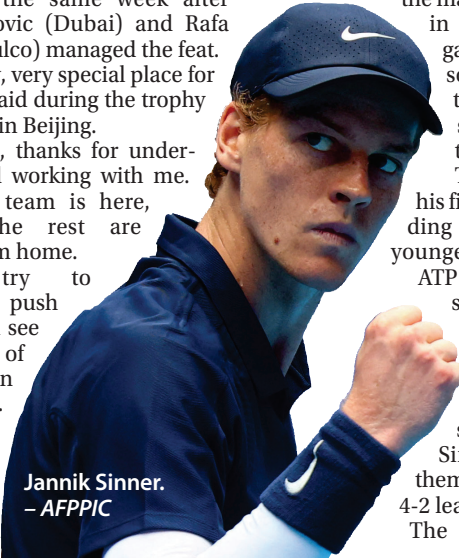
you."

The four-times Grand Slam champion came into the title match at the National Tennis Centre after a hard-fought semifinal win over Alex de Minaur on Tuesday, during which he struggled with physical problems caused by a stomach bug.

There were no signs of discomfort in his first meeting with 19-year-old Tien, however, as Sinner settled into the match with a break in the opening game and looked solid throughout to take the first set with a hold in the final game.

Tien, playing in his first final and bidding to become the youngest American ATP Tour champion since Andy Roddick in 2002, twice earned break points in the second set but Sinner fended them off and built a 4-2 lead.

The 2023 champion



sealed the win on his third match point to become the second man to claim multiple trophies at the ATP 500 event after Djokovic (2009-10, 2012-15).

"You've shown throughout the whole season what a talent you are," Sinner told Tien.

"Keep going. You're playing incredible tennis. I wish you all the best for the rest of the season and obviously for your whole career... hopefully we can share more moments like this in the future."

Sinner will next compete in the Shanghai Masters beginning this week while his main rival Alcaraz recovers from injury.

The Spaniard hurt his ankle in his opening match of the Japan Open but shrugged off the issue to beat American Taylor Fritz 6-4, 6-4 in the final.

Hours later, the 22-year-old posted on *Instagram*, saying: "I'm very disappointed to announce that I won't be able to play the Shanghai Masters this year!

"Unfortunately I've been struggling with some physical issues and, after discussing with my team, we believe the best decision is to rest and recover." - Reuters/AFP

302 **Jobs**

theSun Malaysian Paper **WE ARE HIRING JOIN OUR TEAM**

MEDIA SALES - Specialist

Job Description

- Building and sustaining strong working relationship with advertising agencies and clients.
- New business development and business retention.
- Conceptualise, plan and execute creative and innovative marketing campaigns to enhance brand visibility and engagement.
- Create, develop and continuously improve marketing material, presentations and proposals that showcase our products/services effectively.

Requirements

- SPM level with at least two years of experience.
- Diploma or Bachelor's degree in business, marketing or other related fields.
- Fresh graduates are encouraged to apply, training will be provided.
- Good communication, presentation, problem-solving and organisational skills.
- Passionate in client servicing.
- Possess own transport and willing to travel.
- Able to start work immediately.

Office based in Petaling Jaya (Five-day week)

MEDIA SALES - Representative/Agent (Freelance)

Requirement

- Minimum one year sales experience in classified ad, print and digital advertising.
- Those without sales experience but with media advertising knowledge may also apply.
- Attractive commission package and incentives.
- Able to start immediately.
- Central, Northern, Southern, East Coast and Sabah/Sarawak.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to : thesun.hr2@gmail.com

INSIDE EDGE

'Pope still England's No. 3'

JACOB BETHELL has all the makings of a "generational talent" but Ollie Pope remains in possession of England's No. 3 spot, team director Rob Key said ahead of the Ashes series in Australia. Bethell, who turns 22 this month, became the youngest player to captain an England men's team during their Twenty20 series against Ireland in September. Named in England's 16-man list for the five-test series in Australia, he has also been talked about as a replacement at No. 3 for Pope, who has struggled for consistency and was replaced as vice-captain by Harry Brook. "He (Bethell) becomes someone you're looking at in the far future, as potential leadership. Leaders aren't just your captain," Key said in an episode of the *For The Love Of Cricket* podcast released yesterday. "He's a really important part. He's a conduit between (Ben) Stokes and the younger generation coming through, so he can start developing in that."

England get Lyon warning

NATHAN LYON warned England yesterday that they would be making a mistake if they do not play a spinner during the Ashes, with the veteran Australian sure the wickets will offer variation. England last week unveiled a pace-heavy attack for the five-Test series that gets under way in Perth on Nov 21, spearheaded by five quicks. They include Jofra Archer, Gus Atkinson, Josh Tongue, Brydon Carse and Mark Wood, with captain Ben Stokes and seamer Matthew Potts offering support. Only one specialist spinner, Shoab Bashir, was named in the 16-man squad, with all-rounder Will Jacks his only back-up. Despite the first two Tests at Perth and Brisbane being traditionally bouncy wickets, off-spin great Lyon said Bashir should be involved. "For me, you're picking a spinner in every side because the variation changes the tempo of the game," said Lyon, a veteran and a staple of Australia's side since 2011. "I think a spinner can play a very effective role out here if their skill set suits. To be honest, (England's squad) is all pretty much what we expected."

Where Eagles dare

Crystal Palace soaring under Glasner ahead of European bow against Dynamo Kyiv

CRYSTAL PALACE enter unfamiliar territory tomorrow (12.45am Malaysian time) as they make their first full venture into European football riding a club-record 18-match unbeaten run and fresh off a win over the Premier League champions.

Oliver Glasner's team head to eastern Poland to play Dynamo Kyiv in the Conference League, brimming with confidence after an impressive 2-1 victory over Liverpool on Saturday.

Palace's only previous experience of continental competition was one home-and-away tie in the Intertoto Cup back in 1998, but they return to Europe after beating Manchester City to win last season's FA Cup.

That was the club's first major trophy, and it was followed by another triumphant day out at Wembley with a Community Shield win over Liverpool.

Palace lost a court battle over their demotion from the Europa League after falling foul of Uefa's rules governing multi-club ownership, a rare defeat in recent times for a team thriving under Glasner.

The 51-year-old Austrian's stock has risen to the extent that he is now considered among the favourites for the Manchester United job if Ruben

Amorim is sacked.

"I follow all the rumours - and that's all they are," Glasner told *Kicker* magazine on Tuesday.

But rewind to just a year ago and Glasner's own position was under threat after a dismal start to the season, in which Palace won just one of their first 13 League games.

Glasner took over a team flirting with relegation when he replaced Roy Hodgson in February 2024 but has overseen an astonishing transformation at Selhurst Park despite losing arguably his two best players.

Michael Olise left for Bayern Munich last year while Eberechi Eze completed a switch to Arsenal in August.

Crucially though he managed to hold on to captain Marc Guehi at the transfer deadline after the England defender looked set to join Liverpool.

Glasner denied reports he threatened to quit Palace if Guehi was sold but made a compelling case that convinced chairman Steve Parish to cling on to the centreback.

"At the end of many discussions it was the chairman who asked me: 'Oliver, do you think we can manage the season when we sell Marc?' I said:

'Honestly we can't manage it in the short-term,'" said Glasner.

"If you want this scenario for Crystal Palace and you are fine with it, sell Marc. If you don't want to have this, then we have to keep him. And then he decided we keep him."

Palace risk losing Guehi for nothing when his contract expires in the summer but are reaping the rewards for now, with the Premier League's joint-best defensive record through six games.

The Eagles are the only remaining undefeated team in the League and have already faced four of the sides who finished in the top seven last term.

They are up to third place and trail Liverpool by just three points despite the vast disparity in resources among England's elite.

Glasner, who won the Europa League with Eintracht Frankfurt in 2021/22, can make more history with Palace against Dynamo by eclipsing the club's record unbeaten run originally set back in 1969.

But in a competition where they are viewed as trophy contenders alongside Fiorentina and Strasbourg, Palace will not be content with simply getting a taste of European football. - AFP

Rangers searching for respite

BELEAGUERED Rangers manager Russell Martin finally scraped to his first Scottish Premiership win in charge at the weekend and next takes his struggling side to Austria to face Sturm Graz in the Europa League tomorrow (3am Malaysian time)

The former Southampton boss was brought in with the goal of reaching the Champions League proper and challenging Celtic for the domestic title.

Rangers finished second in the Premiership last season, 17 points behind their Glasgow rivals, after sacking Philippe Clement midway through the campaign.

The nervy 2-1 victory at lowly Livingston on Sunday left Rangers eighth in the 12-team table, already nine points behind surprise leaders Hearts.

Rangers, despite only winning one Scottish title since 2011, have found some respite in Europe in recent years, reaching the 2022 Europa League final and the quarterfinals last term.

But continental football has just piled on the misery so far this campaign.

A humiliating 9-1 aggregate thrashing in Champions League qualifying by Club Brugge was followed by a tame 1-0 home loss to Genk in their Europa League opener.

Rangers finally gave Martin something to cheer at Livingston, thanks to Max Aarons' injury-time winner.

"I think it could be a real big moment for us," Martin said.

"It felt really good in the dressing room, I enjoyed their celebrations.

"I'm really pleased for the players because they showed how hard they're fighting for each other, for us, for me."

Despite ending Rangers' longest winless league run since 2005, fans still chanted for Martin to be sacked after the final whistle.

"I can't control it and I can't waste energy focusing on it," he said. "I have to use that energy for the players and the staff inside the building and to try and improve us and to win more games.

"And hopefully if we do that, everyone will be happy."

Meanwhile, Aston Villa travel to Rotterdam to take on Feyenoord in a battle of former European champions, hoping to put firmly to bed any talk of an early-season crisis.

After going winless in their opening five Premier League matches, with just one goal scored, Unai Emery's men have responded with a Europa League win over Bologna and a 3-1 Premier League victory against Fulham.

Last season's Champions League quarterfinalists will be given a real test of how far they have come in recent weeks at unbeaten Eredivisie leaders Feyenoord.

"We needed to win, it was very clear," Emery said of the Fulham match.

"We played with energy and passion and changed through the match because we recovered confidence." - AFP

Paixao shines as Marseille hit Ajax for four

IGOR PAIXAO'S early double and goals from Mason Greenwood and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang secured Olympique de Marseille a 4-0 win over Ajax Amsterdam at home in the Champions League yesterday.

The Brazilian winger, who had yet to find the net for Marseille, needed six minutes to open his account before doubling his tally six minutes later.

Greenwood added a third before halftime, and Aubameyang rounded off the scoring in the second half, benefiting from Paixao's assist.

Marseille's first Champions League victory since October 2022 gave them their first points of the campaign following their opening 2-1 loss at Real Madrid in mid-September while Ajax suffered a second defeat after beginning with a 2-0 loss to runners-up Inter Milan.

"I'm very happy that I could score these two goals," Paixao said on *Canal+*. "This team has a lot of quality, we delivered a great show today. It was incredible to see the Stade Velodrome like this.

"This match gives a lot of confidence for the team. It's a difficult competition but I think the team is ready to go very far."

Despite a lack of possession

in the early minutes, Marseille opened the scoring with their first opportunity in the sixth minute when Paixao finished off a swift team move started by Nayef Aguerd, with Aubameyang's deft one-touch pass teeing up the goal.

Six minutes later, the winger struck again, firing home a shot from outside the box after Arthur Vermeeren won possession high up the pitch.

In the 26th minute, Aubameyang intercepted the ball in a dangerous area and set up Greenwood, who found the target to score his first Europeangoal for Marseille.

After the interval, Aubameyang completed a quick counter-attack in the 52nd minute, thanks to Paixao who capped his stellar night with an assist.

Ajax keeper Vitezslav Jaros saved his side from a heavier loss when he kept out a Greenwood attempt in stoppage time.

Ajax improved in the second half but Oliver Edvardsen lacked precision on two occasions to trouble Geronimo Rulli. The Argentinian keeper also denied Kenneth Taylor's effort in the 71st minute.

The French club will travel to Portuguese side Sporting next, while Ajax will face Chelsea at Stamford Bridge. - Reuters



Olympique Marseille's Igor Paixao (left) scores their first goal during their Champions League match against Ajax yesterday. - REUTERS/SPIC

Atalanta come from behind to beat Club Brugge

ATALANTA came from behind to beat Belgium's Club Brugge 2-1 at home in the Champions League yesterday with Mario Pasalic netting the winner after earning the penalty that led to the equaliser.

The Croatia international, in his eighth season at the Serie A club, headed home in the 87th minute from a corner to win the game for the hosts, who were trailing with 16 minutes remaining.

Christos Tzolis' first half strike gave the visitors the lead, but a penalty tucked away by Lazar Samardzic in the 74th minute brought Atalanta back into the game.

The win gave the Italian outfit their first points of the campaign after they lost 4-0 to holders Paris St

Germain in their opening league-stage fixture in mid-September, while Brugge already had three points after beating Monaco 4-1 at home.

"In the first half we did well but conceded an avoidable goal," Atalanta coach Ivan Juric told *Sky Sport*.

"In the second half we played the match we had prepared, without losing our heads, pushing them back and creating so many chances.

"The players who came on gave us a huge lift. It was a fully deserved win. We're building a great spirit even though we're missing many players. It was a fierce match against a team that plays good football."

Brugge were first on the score sheet when an

error from Marten de Roon allowed Carlos Forbs to tee up Tzolis, who jinked left and then right before firing home a curling effort in the 38th minute.

Atalanta won a penalty when goalkeeper Nordin Jakkers rushed out to try and tap the ball away from the feet of Pasalic but made contact with the midfielder and gave away the spotkick, which substitute Samardzic converted.

Brugge might have snatched the lead back a minute later, but Romeo Vermant's effort went narrowly wide with the goalkeeper out of position before home pressure told and Pasalic got in at the back post to head home the winner. - Reuters/Agencies

Mourinho not 'fed' by memories

'Special One' gets warm welcome in losing return to the Bridge

BY ROBERT OCONNOR

JOSE MOURINHO thanked Chelsea fans for their reception on his Stamford Bridge return but said memories will not "feed" him after Benfica were beaten 1-0.

Home supporters sang Mourinho's name as early as the second minute but there was little that came from their former idol or his team to generate an engaging sub-plot to complement a routine Blues victory.

An own goal from midfielder Richard Rios in the 18th minute was the difference in a match light on goalmouth excitement as Enzo Maresca's side got their Champions League season going at the second attempt.

All the talk in the build-up had been about three-time Premier League winner Mourinho but

his side never looked a match for Chelsea.

"I don't feed myself with these memories," he said. "I feed myself with victories. Of course I take (the memories).

"On the pitch I was focused on the game, but you have always a little bit of the sound.

"I thank (the fans). I live around and when I'm in London I meet them every day on the street. I know that it's going to be a relationship for ever.

"Hopefully I come back here in 20 years with my grandkids. They belong to my history and I belong to their history."

This was not a vintage display from Chelsea, with Maresca crediting his players for "winning ugly."

They created only one genuine opening throughout, Pedro Neto's lovely cross to the far post being turned back into the six-yard box by a

determined stretch from Alejandro Garnacho and, unable to get out of the ball's path, Rios turned it into his own net.

There was more disciplinary woe for Maresca when substitute Joao Pedro was sent off in the final minute of added time at the end of the match, a second yellow card shown for a high boot bringing their tally of reds to three in four games.

"At least we learned how to win with a red card," said Maresca.

This was at least a more solid showing than in Saturday's defeat to Brighton, when they fell to pieces following Trevoh Chalobah's second-half dismissal, and more ambitious than the 10 vs 10 loss to Manchester United.

"We needed the win," said Maresca. "First half we controlled the game, scored and created more

chances.

"We had some players on the pitch who unfortunately were not 100%. They were playing because we have seven, eight players out. Sometimes you need to learn to win in an ugly way."

Maresca was forced by injuries to field a makeshift forward line with 19-year-old Tyrique George starting at number nine and Brighton loanee Facundo Buonanotte also drafted in.

On the left wing Garnacho impressed on a rare start whilst there was a first inclusion this season for Benoit Badiashile in a patched-up defence.

"It's very difficult," said Maresca. "The ones that play, there is a big risk they can get injured because they are the ones that are playing a lot.

"We struggle to repeat the same XI but it is what it is, we need to adapt." – The Independent

Griezmann 200 up as Atletico hammer hapless Eintracht Frankfurt

ANTOINE GRIEZMANN netted his 200th goal for Atletico Madrid as they secured their first Champions League win of the season with a 5-1 victory over Eintracht Frankfurt yesterday, with Julian Alvarez scoring and getting two assists in a dominant display.

Playing without suspended manager Diego Simeone after his red card in their 3-2 opening defeat at Liverpool, Atletico took charge from the start, buoyed by a fervent home crowd still celebrating Saturday's 5-2 derby thrashing of Real Madrid.

Atletico opened the scoring after four minutes through Giacomo Raspadori, who capitalised on a loose ball in the box after the defence failed to clear an Alvarez effort from a Giuliano Simeone cross, leaving the former Napoli striker unmarked at the edge of the six-yard box.

Griezmann missed a gilt-edged chance midway through the first half, slicing a volley from close range and immediately falling to his knees in disbelief.

But Robin Le Normand extended Atletico's lead in the 32nd minute, firing home the rebound after Griezmann's back-heeled effort from a corner was saved.

Griezmann eventually reached his milestone with a strike from close range in first-half stoppage time, celebrating with an Atletico shirt bearing "200" on the back as the club's record goalscorer.

Alvarez provided the assist with a brilliant run past two defenders before serving the ball on a plate for the French forward to score.

Frankfurt threatened a comeback when Jonathan Burkhardt's deflected effort wrongfooted keeper Jan Oblak in the 57th minute but Giuliano Simeone restored a three-goal cushion with a clever near-post header from a corner two minutes after Griezmann had a second goal ruled out for handball in the



Antoine Griezmann.
– AFP/IC

build-up.

Alvarez completed the rout in the 82nd minute, chipping home a penalty after VAR spotted a handball by Robin Koch.

"I have enjoyed a lot this evening, it's a great feeling. I'm very proud to have reached the 200-goal mark," Griezmann told *Movistar Plus*. "It's been tough but together we've managed to achieve it.

"The team is in good form. The comeback against Rayo (Vallecano in a 3-2 LaLiga win last Wednesday) did us good.

"We're on a roll and we have to keep it up. We're pressing hard, being aggressive and setting a fast pace for the game.

"That's our strength, our style of football, and we have to keep it up. We want to score goals and not concede. We always want more." – Reuters

Frank hails Tottenham character after late show

BY GEORGE SESSIONS

THOMAS FRANK once again talked up Tottenham's character but acknowledged they were second-best for long periods in a fortunate 2-2 draw with Bodo/Glimt in the Champions League.

Spurs needed an 89th-minute own-goal by Jostein Gundersen at Aspmyra Stadion to spare their blushes against a team they beat 5-1 on aggregate in the Europa League semifinals four months ago.

Bodo dominated Tottenham from the outset and after a goalless first half where Kasper Høgh missed a penalty, two fine strikes shortly after the break by Jens Petter Hauge had the Norwegian minnows on course for deserved revenge.

The visitors stand-in captain Micky van de Ven reduced the deficit in the 68th minute and Spurs fought back for a third time this month after

draws with Brighton and Wolves when Gundersen inadvertently deflected the ball in after Bodo goalkeeper Nikita Haikin saved Archie Gray's shot.

"I felt first that the positive is the mentality and character of the players was very good," Frank told *TNT Sports*.

"They stayed in the game, kept fighting and that gave us a very good point away from home.

"When you're 2-0 down in a Champions League game and especially against a Bodo team that is very good here, you should be happy with that.

I am happy that we again got back in the game. I think that is very positive.

"I think until 2-0 and especially first half, it is fair to say Bodo were better than us.

They are exceptionally good at what they are doing, very well-coached, so I think that was clear to see in the first half.

"We struggled a little bit defensively and there

were not enough times we were there with the high pressure.

"I think the times when we were building up, we should have done that a little bit more better and been more brave on the ball, but after 2-0 I felt we got into the game and we were the best team for the last part of the game."

Frank refused to blame Bodo's artificial surface for a lackadaisical display in the Arctic Circle.

"I don't want to complain about the surface. It is what it is," Frank said.

Bodo boss Kjetil Knutsen was left with mixed emotions, saying: "I think we are more Glimt today than in May. I feel we showed the people the good of Glimt and I am proud of it, but still it is only one point.

"We know we are playing against a top, top opponent and unfortunately we were not fit enough to stay in the match for 97 minutes." – The Independent

Dominant Inter sweep past Slavia Prague

INTER MILAN continued their strong start to this season's Champions League yesterday with a comfortable 3-0 win over Slavia Prague at the San Siro.

Goals in each half from captain Lautaro Martinez and another strike from Denzel Dumfries made sure that dominant Inter joined Real Madrid and Bayern Munich on perfect six points.

Last year's losing finalists are on a run of four straight wins in all competitions and were fully deserved winners in Milan.

"Perfection doesn't exist but I can see so much effort from the boys and the willingness to accept things that they were used to doing in the past. That makes me happy and proud," said Chivu.

Speaking later to *Sky Sport Italia*, Chivu said that he was pleased with the attitude that he saw from his players yesterday.

"The game was important and taken seriously. Our attitude was normal," he said.

And on the team's response to his coaching since taking over from Simone Inzaghi, Chivu said: "It's a tightrope, you have to keep the balance.

"The boys always try to have fun, you have to have the right passion, but without losing focus or your attitude.

"To me, it seems like they're growing, but they've behaved brilliantly since the beginning of the season."

Inter fans were treated to a match which was one-way traffic from the first whistle and could have easily ended with more goals for the home team, building on strong recent performances under Chivu.

Martinez was gifted the chance to give Inter the lead on the half-hour when Slavia goalkeeper Jindrich Stanek's weak pass towards David Zima was pounced on by the Argentina striker and rolled into an empty net.

And four minutes later Inter were two ahead following a rapid counter attack launched by Francesco Acerbi and finished off by Dumfries, via some fancy footwork and a perfect low cross from Marcus Thuram.

And France forward Thuram showed another touch of class for Martinez's second in the 65th minute, executing a perfect backheeled pass for Alessandro Bastoni who then squared across for his rampaging skipper.

Man-of-the-match Thuram left the field shortly afterwards with what Chivu later said was a cramp, and the man himself later said the knock was "nothing serious". – AFP/Agencies

Kane brace buries Pafos

Former Spurs skipper shines again as Bayern cruise past Cyprus minnows

HARRY KANE (pic) continued his rich goalscoring form with a brace and Nicolas Jackson scored his first Bayern Munich goal in a 5-1 win at Pafos in the Champions League yesterday.

The result made it two wins from two in the league phase for Bayern following their 3-1 win at home to Premier League side Chelsea on

matchday one, in which Kane netted twice.

"We struggled away from home in the league phase last season," Kane told German TV, calling the match "a good away win"

"I'm going into games with confidence, knowing I'll get my chances. Scored a couple more goals today, I'm happy with that," he added.

Having set the record for the fastest man to 100 goals in a top-five league on Friday, doing so from 104 games, Kane was quick to get on the scoresheet, sliding the ball in with 14 minutes played.

Raphael Guerreiro got in on the action six minutes later, before Jackson added a third for the visitors on the 31st-minute mark.

The goal was Jackson's first since joining on a season-long loan from Chelsea in the summer.

Not known for his dribbling, Kane took the ball past the Pafos defence down the left flank and hammered in with 34 minutes

played. The goal was Kane's 17th in nine games in all competitions for Bayern this season.

Pafos needed a stunner to pull one back just before half-time when Mislav Orsic unleashed a dipping rocket from outside the box, the club's first-ever Champions League goal.

With 21 minutes remaining, Bayern's Michael Olise rewarded himself with a goal, knocking in from a tight angle after Jackson shot straight at the goalkeeper.

The score was a fortunate reflection of the night for the Cypriot side, with Bayern hitting the woodwork three times.

The defending German champions have now won nine from nine to start the season, their best start in 13 years.

There are rumblings that the Bavarians can go all the way and win the Champions League for the first time in six years, but Belgian coach Vincent Kompany doesn't want to get ahead of himself.



Mbappe stars as Real thrash Kairat

Real Madrid's Kylian Mbappe (left) in action with Kairat's Damir Kasabulat. — REUTERSPIC

KYLIAN MBAPPE struck a hattrick as record 15-time Champions League winners Real Madrid romped to a 5-0 league phase win over Kairat in Kazakhstan yesterday.

Xabi Alonso's side bounced back from their thrashing by city rivals Atletico Madrid on Saturday with an emphatic victory on the road, after travelling more than 7,000km.

Mbappe put the hosts to the sword with his treble and Eduardo Camavinga and Brahim Diaz wrapped up Madrid's victory, which took them provisionally top of the table.

Kairat, appearing in the tournament proper for the first time, beat Celtic in qualifying but could not handle *Los Blancos*, even after their long journey east, in particular French superstar Mbappe.

"We can't forget what happened this weekend (against Atletico) but we have to keep thinking about it, and working to be better each day and each week so we don't have another night like that," Mbappe told Movistar.

The forward boasts 13 goals already this season in nine games across all competitions, but looked frustrated with himself when he missed a good chance in the second half.

"My work is helping the team, doing what I can so that the team wins," continued Mbappe.

"If I have five chances, and I want to score five goals then I have to score five goals, that's why Real Madrid bought me.

"I'll work to be better and try to score

more goals and be more efficient in front of goal."

Hosts Kairat lined up with 18-year-old Sherkan Kalmurza in goal because of injuries to three other goalkeepers at the club.

Kalmurza was to blame for Madrid's opener, as he clumsily felled Franco Mastantuono.

Mbappe sent Kalmurza the wrong way from the spot in the 25th minute.

Seven minutes into the second period Mbappe grabbed his second, after a long kick by goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois sent him through on goal.

"It was an enormous pass worth 80% of the goal, and I added the other 20%," said Mbappe.

Mbappe then completed his treble after Arda Guler flicked the ball into his path on the edge of the box and he produced a razor-sharp finish.

Camavinga, on as a substitute, nodded home after 83 minutes and Diaz rounded off Madrid's rout in stoppage time.

Madrid coach Alonso praised Mbappe's triple contribution.

"He's decisive in practically every game. He's clinical in front of goal," said Alonso.

"He also scored a spectacular goal the other day in the derby. We need his quality to flourish.

"Not just for the goals, but for everything, for his influence. He can have a spectacular season." — AFP

"I said very clearly before the first game that our dream is to be there and have a chance to win it," Kompany declared.

"Winning the Champions League is very difficult. But now we're in the middle of the competition and we have to focus on just winning the next game.

"Although we won by a large margin, I believe Pafos is a difficult team to face, especially at home. It looked easy, but it wasn't

"In the second half, we had to fight and run to stabilise the game, and afterward, we were able to create increasingly dangerous situations." — AFP/Agencies

WINNING NUMBERS damacai

Draw Date: 01/10/25 (Wed) Draw No: 5975/25 Venue: WISMA GENTING, KL

1+3D SUPER 1+3D

1st Prize	9693
2nd Prize	6863
3rd Prize	7067

Starters	Consolation
0476 2264	0366 7453
0293 0350	9425 4596
2981 0709	5509 1700
9573 6126	0330 3623
8797 9711	3509 6351

1-3D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 RM6,749,696.50

9693 + 6863	6863 + 9693
9693 + 7067	7067 + 9693
6863 + 7067	7067 + 6863

Jackpot 2 RM609,216.30

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

1st Prize	Bonus	1st Prize Bonus
909 693 + ROOSTER		RM200,000.00
2nd Prize	Bonus	2nd Prize Bonus
776 863 + SNAKE		RM350,000.00
3rd Prize	Bonus	3rd Prize Bonus
397 067 + GOAT		RM519,097.10

Starters	Consolation
670 476 652 264	870 366 007 453
840 293 550 350	949 425 624 596
932 981 340 709	745 509 181 700
939 573 246 126	260 330 833 623
208 797 109 711	943 509 136 351

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
693	863	067

3D Jackpot

Jackpot RM695,351.10

693 + 863 + 067	863 + 067 + 693
693 + 067 + 863	067 + 693 + 863
863 + 693 + 067	067 + 863 + 693

Winning combination matches the Top 3 Prizes in any order.

GO Package is now on sale! Get it before it's sold out!



The Community Chest is an independent, not-for-profit, non-governmental charitable organisation which supports education for the sole benefit of the Malaysian community and is primarily funded by the profits of Da Ma Cai.

Pan Malaysian Pools Sdn. Bhd. (171698-P) www.damacai.com.my
dmcGO play anywhere: www.dmcGO.com.my or call 03-2333 2000

SPORTS TOTO RESULTS

DRAW NO: 6028/2025 DATE: 01/10/2025 (WED)
STM LOTTERY SDN. BHD.
196901000090 (8420-D)

TOTO 4D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

1st Prize	7762
2nd Prize	2093
3rd Prize	8659

Special	Consolation
3317 6772	3408 9919
8801 2242	4326 7333
4918 4062	3793 4092
4966 3434	5222 3458
4810 5475	4071 5849

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 RM 12,665,170.53

7762 2093	2093 7762
7762 8659	8659 7762
2093 8659	8659 2093

Jackpot 2 RM 350,993.36

Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

1st Prize	7762	+	SNAKE
2nd Prize	2093	+	
3rd Prize	8659	+	
4th Prize	Special Prize	+	
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+	
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	+	

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

5D 1ST	5 2 4 6 1
4TH	2 4 6 1
2ND	7 7 4 7 2
5TH	4 6 1
3RD	6 7 5 9 9
6TH	6 1

6D 1ST	2 7 5 7 5 2
2ND	2 7 5 7 5 or 7 5 7 5 2
3RD	2 7 5 7 or 5 7 5 2
4TH	2 7 5 or 7 5 2
5TH	2 7 or 5 2

TOTO GAMES GIVES YOU MORE WINNING CHANCES!

SUPREME 6/58	6 17 37 38 55 57
Jackpot	RM 16,394,204.43

POWER 6/55	5 7 12 34 52 55
Jackpot	RM 3,135,408.14

STAR 6/50	7 19 21 25 37 48 + 45
Jackpot 1	RM 10,858,223.50
Jackpot 2	RM 194,029.11

Visit www.sportstoto.com.my for e-Results and more info.



RESULTS & STANDINGS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE

Atalanta 2 (Samardzic 74-pen, Pasalic 87) **Club Brugge 1** (Tzolis 38), **Kairat Almaty 0**
Real Madrid 5 (Mbappe 25-pen, 52, 73, Camavinga 83, Diaz 90+3), **Atletico Madrid 5** (Raspadori 4, Le Normand 33, Griezmann 45+1, Simeone 70, Alvarez 82-pen) **Eintracht Frankfurt 1** (Burkardt 57), **Bodo/Glimt 2** (Hauge 53, 66)
Tottenham 2 (Van de Ven 68, Gundersen 89-og), **Chelsea 1** (Rios 18-og) **Benfica 0**, **Galatasaray 1** (Osimhen 16-pen)
Liverpool 0, **Inter Milan 3** (Martinez 30, 65, Dumfries 34) **Slavia Prague 0**, **Marseille 4** (Paixao 6, 12, Greenwood 26, Aubameyang 52) **Ajax 0**, **Pafos 1** (Orsic 45) **Bayern Munich 5** (Kane 15, 34, Guerreiro 20, Jackson 31, Olise 68).

SPANISH LA LIGA

Valencia 1 (Danjuma 4) **Oviedo 2** (Ilic 85, Rondon 86).

Devan hopeful despite defeat

DPMM FC edge Melaka to secure first win of season

MELAKA FC head coach K. Devan remains confident that his team can bounce back in their upcoming fixtures despite falling 1-0 to Brunei's DPMM FC in their Super League clash at the Hang Jebat Stadium on Tuesday night.

He said his optimism was based on the likely return of several key players who were sidelined through injury, which he believes will strengthen the team's overall play.

"In terms of the game, we did not lose our identity... the players controlled possession, defended well and did not give DPMM space to create chances.

"The only problem was that we failed to convert our chances, and luck was not on Melaka FC's side," he told reporters after the match.

DPMM FC sealed victory through a 36th-minute penalty converted by Jordan Murray, awarded after Melaka's Irfan Zakaria was penalised for handball inside the box.

Melaka, however, were unable to take advantage of two excellent opportunities to draw level when Abdul Azim Rahim's 26th-minute penalty and Danilo Augusto Magalhaes's 68th-minute spot-kick were both saved by DPMM goalkeeper Haimie Abdullah Nyaring.

The coach said his focus now is on refining preparations ahead of their clash with Kelantan United on Oct. 24.

Meanwhile, DPMM FC head coach McAllister James Reynolds expressed satisfaction with his players' discipline and hard work in securing the 1-0 win, which also earned them three points.

With the win, DPMM moved up to ninth in the Super League table with four points, while Melaka remain in 10th place with three points.

The match started lively with Melaka almost taking the lead as early as the eighth minute through Abdul Azim Rahim, but his attempt struck the post. This was followed by Aiman Danish Abdul Azim's 14th-minute effort that went just wide.

DPMM also came close to scoring in the 17th minute but Hanif Farhan Azman's shot sailed over the bar.

The hosts were awarded a penalty after a Video Assistant Referee (VAR) review found Abdul Azim had been brought down by Fairuz Zakaria in the 20th minute.

However, the spot kick taken by Abdul Azim

himself was brilliantly saved by DPMM goalkeeper Haimie Abdullah Nyaring.

In the 36th minute, DPMM broke the deadlock when Murray converted a penalty after the ball struck Melaka player Irfan Zakaria's hand in the box, and the score remained unchanged until half-time.

Melaka were awarded another penalty in the second half after VAR found Afeeq had been fouled in the box, but Augusto Magalhaes' 68th-minute strike was again saved by Haimie.

DPMM were reduced to 10 men in the 82nd minute when their import player, Jordan Rodrigues, was shown the red card after receiving a second yellow. - Bernama

Two in a row for Malucelli

XDS ASTANA Team rider Matteo Malucelli once again displayed a powerful ride to win Stage Four of the 2025 Le Tour de Langkawi (LTdL), covering 141.5km from Kuala Terengganu to Kemaman.

It was the Italian's second consecutive victory after triumphing in Stage Three on Tuesday, and his third overall following his success in Stage One.

The 31-year-old rider clocked three hours 17 minute 56 second in another mass finish edging out Manuel Penalver Aniorte of Team Polti VisitMalta, who finished second while Erlend Blikra from Uno-X Mobility completed the podium in third.

Commenting on his victory, Malucelli described his third stage win in LTdL 2025 as incredible and credited his teammates for making it possible today.

"I won with a great team and a great lead-out. Usually, I do everything on my own, but today the team worked really well. This is our fourth stage together, and now we have found our rhythm," he said when met after the race yesterday.

The Stage four victory enabled Malucelli to retain the Green Jersey (Overall Leader) and the Orange Jersey (Sprint) for the fourth consecutive stage.

The White Jersey (Best Asian Rider) remains with Terengganu Cycling Team (TSG) rider Vadim Pronskiy, while the Polka Dot Jersey (King of the Mountains) stays with Patrick Eddy of Team Picnic PostNL.

Meanwhile, Malaysia Pro Cycling rider, Mohamad Izzat Hilmi Abdul Halil emerged as the Best Asean Rider for Stage Four, a category introduced this year in conjunction with the 47th Asean Summit hosted by Malaysia.

Stage Five of the 2.Pro status race continues today from Temerloh to Fraser's Hill over a 123.1km distance, featuring three sprint zones in Mentakab, Bukit Damar and Mempaga as well as a two climb zones at Raub and Fraser's Hill. - Bernama



JDT head coach Xisco Munoz. - BERNAMAPIC

Munoz all praise for disciplined JDT

JOHOR DARUL TA'ZIM (JDT) head coach Xisco Munoz praised his team's disciplined display despite a 0-0 draw against Machida Zelvia in their AFC Champions League Elite (ACLE) 2025/26 match at the Sultan Ibrahim Stadium in Iskandar Puteri on Tuesday night.

Munoz described the match as "an important day for us" and stressed the need to keep the momentum while improving attacking details to secure victory in future games.

He acknowledged that Machida's physical style and pressing tactics made it a challenging encounter, but commended JDT's defensive discipline and unity under pressure.

"It was not easy. They have three strikers, two midfielders pressing... but the team gave a very good performance. Everybody gives their best, and we can congratulate the players for their level of performance and attitude," he said.

On the penalty awarded to Machida in the 22nd minute - which was missed - Munoz emphasised the importance of composure, saying the team must maintain control of their emotions in such situations.

Munoz also addressed the absence of key players

Hector Hevel, Joao Figueiredo and Jon Irazabal following FifaA suspensions, saying the team had to adapt accordingly while remaining focused.

Goalkeeper Ahmad Syihan Hazmi Mohamed, who was named Player of the Match, said the squad had given their best and would work to improve their game plan for upcoming fixtures.

"Alhamdulillah, we cannot be overconfident as there are still many games ahead. We need to continue improving to score goals. But for tonight's game, I am very grateful," he said.

Meanwhile, Machida Zelvia head coach Go Kuroda expressed satisfaction with his team's defensive performance, noting it was the club's first-ever international away match.

He said the main objective was to remain strong and play aggressively to stop JDT's counter-attacks, adding that his players performed well despite lacking precision in passing and finishing.

On the missed penalty, Kuroda acknowledged its significance but emphasised the necessity to focus on scoring during open play and addressing areas for improvement in future matches. - Bernama

Karen-Ai Xin out to end 30-year wait

THE historic achievement of becoming the first Malaysian pair to clinch a World Tour title at the World Table Tennis Feeder Vientiane 2025 in Laos last August has fired up the spirit of national women's doubles pair Karen Lyne-Tee Ai Xin to pursue gold at the 2025 SEA Games in Thailand.

Lyne is optimistic that the long-awaited gold medal, which has eluded Malaysia for more than 30 years in the event, is now within reach, given that the gap between them and other regional challengers has narrowed in recent times.

"I feel our performance is getting better. Of course, the challenge will be tough, but we will

try our best.

"So far, this year we have also taken part in many overseas tournaments and that has helped improve our performance," she told reporters after receiving a visit from the Chef de Mission (CDM) to the 2025 SEA Games, Nurul Huda Abdullah, at the national table tennis squad's training venue in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Meanwhile, Ai Xin admitted she was thrilled to present the nation with its first-ever World Tour title, which has certainly boosted their motivation to chase more proud achievements in the future.

Meanwhile, national coach Beh Lee Wei has set her charges the tar-

get of bringing home gold at the 2025 SEA Games.

She said apart from the women's doubles, both the men's and women's team events also have the potential to contribute gold medals for Malaysia in Thailand, which would improve on their haul of three silvers and two bronzes at the previous edition in Cambodia.

The women's doubles pair of Phua Bee Sim-Chong Choi Thing were the last Malaysians to win gold in the event at the 1991 SEA Games in Manila.

The 2025 Thailand SEA Games are scheduled to be held from Dec 9 to 20 in three provinces - Bangkok, Chonburi and Songkhla. - Bernama

Magnum Corporation Sdn Bhd (8272-D)
Winning Results
 Full payment guaranteed

Draw No: 265/25 Date: 01/10/2025

4D Classic

1st Prize	1053
2nd Prize	1959
3rd Prize	5482

SPECIAL		CONSOLATION	
5516	1914	4289	4676
9446	5757	6893	9127
6881	0092	0536	9314
1676	5421	7250	6841
8534	3719	8540	1955

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM5,798,971.68**

1053 + 1959	1053 + 5482
1959 + 1053	1959 + 5482
5482 + 1053	5482 + 1959

Jackpot 2 **RM335,068.38**

WON

Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

Play smarter. Get rewarded with MyMagnum 4D app!

Magnum Life

12 15 16 22 28 31 33 35

+ 17 34

Grand Prize
 RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 20 years

2nd Prize **WON**
 RM1,000 EVERY DAY for 100 days

Jackpot Gold

Jackpot 1 **RM10,469,249.20**
 Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM109,857.90**
 Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	5 3 5 9 8 2
GROUP 2	5 3 5 9 8 OR 3 5 9 8 2
GROUP 3	5 3 5 9 OR 5 9 8 2
GROUP 4	5 3 5 OR 9 8 2
GROUP 5	5 3 OR 8 2
	OR 5 9
GOLDEN NUMBER	0 0

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to www.magnum4d.my for more info. THE BIGGER PLAY IS TO PLAY RESPONSIBLY



SCAN ME

Sports

THURSDAY | OCT 2, 2025



LIVERPOOL manager Arne Slot and captain Virgil van Dijk have urged for calm and patience as the team continues to gel after the Reds' loss to Galatasaray in the Champions League.

The Reds produced a disjointed performance in both attack and defence as they slipped to consecutive losses for just the second time in Slot's tenure, with the defeat meaning they sit 16th in the league

"The margins are small and they were last season. For the second time in a row we are on the wrong side."

Reds captain van Dijk said that he is "very confident" his team will return to the levels last season, adding that Liverpool "had a good start this year in terms of points tally."

"I think we have showed it (authority) already in many games this season but we haven't shown it for the full 90 minutes yet unfortunately,"

Galatasaray's Lucas Torreira (left) and Liverpool's Curtis Jones fight for the ball in Istanbul yesterday. - AFP/IC

muscle problem as he made a save from Victor Osimhen and Slot was quick to rule him out of Saturday's (Sunday 12.30 Malaysian time) trip to Chelsea.

"It's never positive if you go off like this," Slot said. "You can be sure he is not playing Saturday."

"When he sprinted back, he felt something. I cannot tell you because I am not a physician but normally when a player sprints back and feels something and goes to the floor and doesn't come back to the pitch, nine times out of 10 I fear the worst.

"And with the worst I mean he cannot continue and that is what happened with Alisson. He will not be able to play Saturday, 99.9%, I have already said 100%."

Slot is more optimistic about Ekitike but warned the forward's problem may be worse than he thinks.

"He felt something when he had to reach for the ball," he added. "Hugo felt something."

"And after the game, that's always the difficult thing with these moments, when players feel like, 'oh, it's not too bad,' but when you just walk around with something different, and when you make a spin, you have to shoot another one from the target.

"He said he couldn't continue, so we had to take him off. Let's see how he responds." - The Independent/Express Newspapers

Disjointed Reds

Van Dijk insists Liverpool 'shouldn't panic' despite Galatasaray defeat

phase table with several clubs still to play a second match.

Both Slot and van Dijk were questioned on whether the team was showing the same level of composure and authority as last season, with the manager suggesting that he thinks his side are "not so far" away from the level shown in matches last term.

"For me I saw a lot [of composure] in the first half, the way we played and controlled the game, got our attackers in promising positions," Slot said to *Amazon Prime*. "(But) this is sometimes what the schedule can bring.

"From the starting XI there are three or four positions (that are different) and I have to manage minutes. You see today (Hugo) Ekitike and Alisson going off, that's why we have to rotate a little bit.

"In the meantime, we've only lost one Champions League game and one Premier League game," he added.

he stressed.

"There shouldn't be panic, but improvement is needed."

Slot suggested he had no regrets about benching Mohamed Salah after yesterday defeat as the Reds managed only four shots on target despite dominating the ball in Istanbul.

"There are a few players for us that missed pre-season so you cannot play them every game. Well, you can, but then it becomes a risk of players getting injured.

"It's not always that I want to rotate but I sometimes just need to because a player is not ready to play three times 90 minutes in seven or eight days."

Liverpool face some new injury concerns after Ekitike and Alisson were substituted at Rams Park, with Slot seemingly ruling the Brazilian goalkeeper out of the weekend's fixture.

The Brazilian suffered a suspected

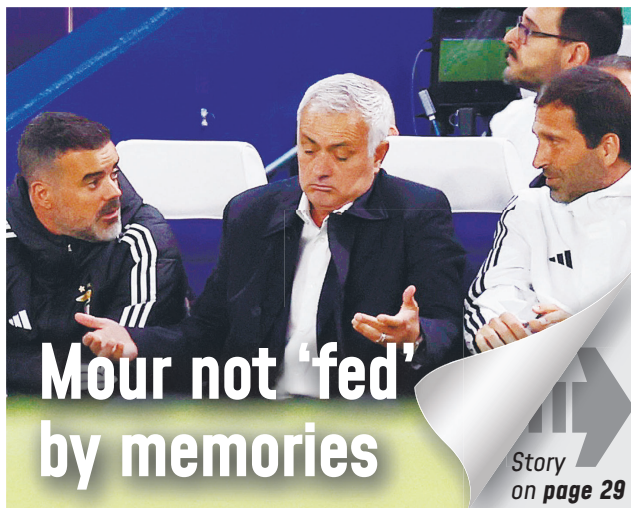


Galatasaray's Ismail Jakobs (right) and Liverpool's Mohamed Salah in action yesterday. - REUTERS/PIC



Where Eagles dare

Story on page 28



Mour not 'fed' by memories

Story on page 29



Devan hopeful despite defeat

Story on page 31