theSun

Malaysian Paper

SATURDAY
OCT 25, 2025

RM1

SCAN ME

www.thesun.my RM1.00 PER COPY No. 8953 PP 2644/12/2012 (031195)



'Reliance on foreign cloud providers exposes nation to external threats'

Malaysia must accelerate cooperation among govt, industry and academia to develop secure, locally managed systems: Experts

Report on page 5

The simultaneous presence of President Donald Trump and Chinese Premier Li Qiang at the Asean Summit will be a litmus test for Asean's long-standing principle of centrality amid mounting strategic rivalry between Washington and Beijing. – ***ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN***



NGO warns against 'dangerous return' to punitive practices in schools

'Violence in education institutions stems not from student misbehaviour but from systemic neglect, and real prevention lies in safeguarding, not punishment.'

Report on page 4

Cops nab 31, including minors, over child sexual abuse material

Police seize more than 880,000 pornographic files in nationwide operation jointly conducted with MCMC.

Report on page 6

Defining moment for Asean

Report on page 3

Credibility, unity and diplomatic balance of bloc put to test as world witnesses rare simultaneous presence of leaders from US and China in Malaysia.

FOLLOW theSun ON TWITTER
@thesundaily
SCAN ME

Economic growth in region must be inclusive, equitable: Sultan Nazrin

KUALA LUMPUR: The Sultan of Perak Sultan Nazrin Shah has called on Asean member states to ensure that economic progress across the region remains inclusive and equitable, as growth without inclusion risks widening social divides and eroding trust in institutions.

He said inclusive growth must benefit all levels of society, from those residing in capital cities to rural communities, while protecting the environment and future generations.

"Economic growth must continue to be broad-based and equitable, benefitting everyone, from our capital cities to smaller towns and rural communities.

"At the same time, we must work harder than ever to ensure that our growth strategies do not harm our wonderful environment or exacerbate the already escalating crisis of global warming," he said in his royal address at the 2025 Asean Inclusive Growth Summit yesterday.

Sultan Nazrin said inclusive development must cater to the needs of current citizens without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, adding that it is vital for stability, regional cohesion and the legitimacy of institutions.

He said good governance forms the foundation of inclusive growth, as integrity and accountability are crucial to strengthen public trust in leadership.

Sultan Nazrin said citizens across Asean are increasingly demanding greater transparency and fairness, and that such calls should not be viewed as a challenge to leadership but an invitation to deepen it.

He cited Malaysia's ongoing reforms in procurement, public finance and digital service delivery as examples of initiatives that have helped to strengthen trust between citizens and institutions.

"Similar stories are unfolding across the region, from open data initiatives that enhance public oversight to participatory budgeting processes that bring citizens closer to decision-making. Like growth, governance can and must be inclusive.

"When it is inclusive, trust can grow, and with that comes legitimacy, stability and the confidence to invest and innovate."

On the role of the financial sector, Sultan Nazrin said ethical finance must drive inclusion and shared prosperity.

He called for businesses to adopt the "triple bottom line" of people, planet and profit in their decision-making.

He said Islamic finance has been a proven model of value-based growth, as it now represents more than 40% of Malaysia's financial system assets and continues to expand.

He highlighted that globally, the industry has surpassed US$5 trillion (RM21.1 trillion) and continues to grow by double digits annually, even amid global financial uncertainty.

"Islamic finance connects capital with purpose, encouraging investment in productive enterprises while discouraging speculation and exploitation."

Sultan Nazrin also said millions within Asean, however, remain excluded from financial and digital access, with nearly 200 million adults unbanked, and broadband coverage in rural areas lagging significantly behind urban areas.

He said a strong economy cannot exist in isolation from the welfare of its people, stressing that economic gains must translate into tangible social progress.

The Sultan said technological transformation can be a powerful driver of inclusion but warned that it could also deepen inequality if access and literacy fail to keep pace.

He also spoke about the importance of building digital trust through stronger cybersecurity, data privacy and responsible governance of emerging technologies.

Calling for regional unity, Sultan Nazrin said Asean's diversity is a strength to be nurtured. – Bernama

Spotlight on Malaysia as nation hosts Asean Summit

COMMENT by Datuk Seri Wong Chun Wai

Apart from US president, leaders from China, Japan, Russia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa expected to attend, making it a momentous event

KUALA LUMPUR: The spotlight will be on Malaysia when the country hosts the Asean Summit this weekend with a large turnout of world leaders, including United States (US) President Donald Trump.

To date, only two US presidents have visited Malaysia – Lyndon B. Johnson in 1966 and Barack Obama twice, once in April 2014 and again in November 2015.

For Malaysia and for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, this historic event is beyond ceremonial as it has to be more than just a diplomatic photo opportunity.

Apart from Trump, top representatives from across the globe, including China, Japan, Russia, Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, are also attending, making it one of the largest and most significant international gatherings ever hosted by Malaysia.

A total of 2,854 media personnel from 290 agencies from within and outside the country have registered to cover the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits.

It represents a convergence of diplomacy, trade-advantage and global branding that could shape the country's trajectory for years.

There are plenty of issues that Asean and major world leaders want to discuss. From trade tariffs to regional economic cooperation to even Palestine.

Then, there are side and bilateral meetings that leaders want, with programmes still being arranged.

Malaysian ministers and business delegations will want to engage with counterparties, explore investments, anchor supply-chains and secure trade deals.

What better place than in Kuala Lumpur, where these trade and foreign relations issues can be brought up face to face.

A global stage is set for Malaysia, where our diplomacy is seen as open, relevant and credible.

Although our term as the Asean chairman just spans a year, we have proven to the region and the world that we have played an effective and meaningful leadership role.

This kind of visibility brings value – foreign direct investment, diplomatic goodwill and global media attention.

Anwar is looking forward to meeting Trump with one major agenda item – how the US can ease or address tariffs and economic matters, in particular to maintain the zero tariffs for electrical and electronic components.

While economic and political ties are important, this is an opportunity to emphasise our Malaysian values and Global South initiatives, which must be respected.

We maintain our independent voice and defend principles of justice, inclusivity and multilateral rules-based system, including our concerns over the grave situation affecting Palestinians in Gaza, while engaging with the US, an important trading partner for Malaysia.

But credit must be given to Anwar with his extensive global reach with world leaders. His personal relations with these powerful personalities with his "telephone diplomacy" has been effective and unprecedented in our nation's foreign relations conduct. It is unmatched.

Malaysia may be just a small middle-income nation, but Anwar has positioned Malaysia as an active "bridge" between major powers, emerging blocs and regional dynamics.

As the Asean chair, he has emphasised the regional bloc's centrality, regional cohesion and Malaysia's role in shaping the architecture of Southeast Asia.

In so doing, Anwar strengthens his personal political standing and Malaysia's standing simultaneously.

Malaysia's ability to host a summit with a large presence of world leaders signals that we remain relevant and autonomous and our ability to convene, to mediate and to stand as a regional hub of cooperation.

By bringing the world to Malaysia and using the summit to highlight Malaysian priorities and values such as poverty eradication, inclusivity and the digital economy, he reinforces his domestic credentials, as one report put it.

"Hosting smoothly – logistics, security, hospitality – will bolster public perception of Malaysia's competence.

"If the summit is seen as successful, it translates into political capital: Malaysia is shown to be mature, stable and outward-looking under Anwar's leadership," the report added.

But substance and results must be seen beyond the grandeur. There has to be a return on investment. The spotlight has to be converted into tangible economic and diplomatic returns.

Certainly, Malaysia hopes the summit would mark a strategic inflection point for our nation.

This is a chance to show what Malaysia stands for and can do, as we stand proudly in the eyes of the world. It is certainly a great prelude for Visit Malaysia 2026 as the world looks at Malaysia.

Datuk Seri Wong Chun Wai is a National Journalism Laureate and Bernama chairman.



Timor-Leste Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao, who arrived in Malaysia ahead of the Asean Summit, inspecting a guard of honour at the Bunga Raya Complex, KL International Airport yesterday. **– *BERNAMAPIC***

Country's leadership in regional bloc praised

JAKARTA: Asean secretary-general Dr Kao Kim Hourn has commended Malaysia's leadership for steering the regional bloc with readiness and foresight through one of its most challenging periods, citing Kuala Lumpur's firm commitment to unity, economic integration and regional stability.

"I commend Malaysia's leadership for advancing Asean's core interests – political-security, economic, socio-cultural and connectivity," he said in a recent interview with Radio Republik Indonesia.

Kao said Malaysia has demonstrated steady leadership amid global challenges, including the war in Ukraine, the devastating conflict in Gaza and volatile trade conditions that continue to test regional resilience.

He said Malaysia's chairmanship had accelerated regional economic integration, particularly through efforts to upgrade the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement, a key step towards realising a single market and production base.

Malaysia also hosted the 2nd Asean-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) Summit in May, held back-to-back with the 46th Asean Summit.

Kao credited Malaysia for expanding Asean's partnership with key dialogue partners, including China, South Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the GCC states.

He also lauded Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim's diplomatic leadership in promoting regional peace and consensus-building, particularly in mediating an immediate and unconditional ceasefire between Thailand and Cambodia following the border dispute between the two member states. – Bernama

Malaysia urged to champion use of lifestyle medicine

KUALA LUMPUR: As regional leaders convene for the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits here this week, the Malaysian Society of Lifestyle Medicine (MSLM) has urged Malaysia to use its Asean Chairmanship to champion Lifestyle Medicine as a core strategy in Asean's fight against non-communicable diseases (NCD).

MSLM founding president Dr Siva Poobalasingam said Malaysia's leadership of Asean in 2025 offers an opportune moment to strengthen regional health cooperation as member states work to address rising rates of diabetes, cardiovascular disease and other NCD.

"As Chair of the Advisory Board of the Lifestyle Medicine Global Alliance, I believe Malaysia must lead Asean in integrating Lifestyle Medicine into public health policy – especially when NCD account for about 62% of deaths in the region," he told Bernama.

He said lifestyle medicine – an evidence-based discipline that prevents and manages chronic diseases through healthy behaviour change – aligns closely with the Asean Post-2015 Health Development Agenda and the bloc's emerging Post-2025 Vision, which prioritises health resilience and sustainable development.

"Lifestyle medicine emphasises six pillars – a predominantly plant-based diet, regular physical activity, restorative sleep, stress management, avoidance of harmful substances and positive social connections," he said.

Siva said Malaysia's success with the World Health Organisation–Health Ministry pilot project on "Lifestyle Medicine for Remission of Diabetes" in Negeri Sembilan has positioned the country as a regional model for evidence-based intervention.

"The project combined clinical practice, training and policy development. It demonstrated how lifestyle medicine can be implemented within public primary care and its framework could be adopted across Asean," he said.

He added that MSLM has proposed the establishment of an Asean Centre for Lifestyle Medicine in Malaysia to support policy development, capacity building and the integration of lifestyle medicine into member states' health systems.

Siva said Malaysia's efforts to positionl lifestyle medicine on the Asean agenda reflect the summit's broader theme of building a resilient, inclusive and healthy Asean community.

Defining test of unity, diplomatic balance

KUALA LUMPUR: The 47th Asean Summit hosted by Malaysia is shaping up to be a defining test of the regional bloc's credibility, unity and diplomatic balance as United States (US) President Donald Trump and Chinese Premier Li Qiang are set to attend, a rare convergence of the world's two largest powers on Asean soil.

Their simultaneous presence is expected to transform the summit into a critical test of Asean's long-standing principle of centrality amid mounting strategic rivalry between Washington and Beijing.

International Islamic University Malaysia Political Science and Madani Studies Department lecturer Prof Dr Zainal Abidin Sanusi said Asean's strength lies not in taking sides, but in building bridges.

He said the participation of both Washington and Beijing's top leaders reaffirms Asean's position as a trusted platform for dialogue and conflict prevention.

Zainal Abidin said amid global tensions and shifting alliances, the summit will reveal whether Asean can continue to act as a neutral and sustainable convener in an increasingly polarised world.

The summit will not only highlight Asean's diplomatic dexterity but also its moral coherence and ability to engage all partners without being drawn into rivalry, he told Bernama yesterday.

"Asean's sustainability depends on balance, the ability to keep peace while advancing prosperity. This is where Malaysia's leadership through principled pragmatism becomes crucial," he said.

He added that the presence of both Trump and Li gives a rare opportunity for Asean to demonstrate that cooperation remains possible when anchored in shared responsibility and sustainability.

He said Malaysia should seize the moment to promote an Asean Sustainability Compact initiatives, linking economic growth with environmental stewardship and social resilience.

Under the theme "Inclusivity and Sustainability", Zainal Abidin said Malaysia's 2025 chairmanship seeks to integrate environmental, economic and social sustainability into the bloc's long-term agenda, and this approach aligns with Malaysia's Madani vision which emphasises development.

"The summit provides an opportunity to advance the green economy, digital transformation and equitable growth, while strengthening regional stability through cooperation with both superpowers."

Zainal Abidin said in balancing relations between Washington and Beijing, Asean must navigate the strategic competition between US and China with prudence and collective strength.

"Asean should not be seen as a pawn in power politics, but as a platform of shared leadership".

He said as the Indo-Pacific becomes increasingly fragmented, Asean's unity and its ability to project moral and diplomatic consistency will determine its relevance for the next generation.

"The founding vision of 'peace through cooperation' must now evolve into 'sustainability through shared responsibility'," he said.

> Participation of US, China top leaders reaffirms bloc's position as trusted platform for dialogue, conflict prevention: Academic



Zainal Abidin said the summit provides an opportunity to advance the green economy, digital transformation and equitable growth, while strengthening regional stability through cooperation with both superpowers. – ***ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN***

Two historic milestones highlight of conference: Sec-gen

KUALA LUMPUR: The 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits to be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre here will live up to Malaysia's Chairmanship theme of "Inclusivity and Sustainability", said Foreign Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Amran Mohamed Zin.

He said this can be seen through two historic milestones that will be highlighted during the summit, namely the admission of Timor-Leste as Asean's 11th member state and the 20th anniversary of the East Asia Summit (EAS).

Amran, who chaired the Asean Senior Officials' Meeting (SOM) yesterday, said both milestones symbolise Asean's enduring commitment to inclusivity and sustainability, which define Malaysia's Asean Chairmanship this year.

"The admission of Timor-Leste as Asean's 11th member state epitomises inclusivity by expanding our Asean family to embrace a nation whose aspirations align with our shared values of peace and cooperation.

"Second, the 20th anniversary of the EAS stands as a testament to two decades of strategic dialogue and cooperation that have strengthened regional stability and reaffirmed Asean's central role in shaping a peaceful and prosperous regional order," he said in his opening remarks at the meeting, held ahead of the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits.

Amran said these milestones serve as a reminder that Asean's strength lies in its ability to evolve while remaining anchored in its founding principles of unity, consensus and mutual respect.

He also expressed confidence that the SOM would produce meaningful recommendations for Asean leaders to consider during the summit, reinforcing the region's collective vision for a more inclusive and sustainable future.

"As we (Malaysia) prepare to pass the gavel, we do so with pride in our collective achievements and deep confidence in the robust foundations we have laid together. Let us carry this same spirit of cooperation as we move towards the 47th Asean Summit and beyond," he said.

The closed-door meeting was attended by SOM representatives from Asean member states, including Johariah Wahab from Brunei, Kung Phoak from Cambodia, Sidharto Reza Suryodipuro from Indonesia, Phongsavanh Sisoulath from Laos, Han Win Aung from Myanmar, Hellen B. De La Vega from the Philippines, Albert Chua from Singapore, Eksiri Pintaruchi from Thailand and Dang Hoang Giang from Vietnam.

Also present were Timor-Leste's SOM representative Milena Maria da Costa Rangel and deputy secretary-general of Asean for Asean Political-Security Community Datuk Astanah Abdul Aziz.

As Asean Chair this year, Malaysia will host the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits from tomorrow to Tuesday, bringing together leaders from the 10 member states and dialogue partners, including the United States, China, Japan and South Korea. – Bernama

Plan in advance, KLIA travellers told

KUALA LUMPUR: AirAsia has advised all guests travelling to and from Kuala Lumpur International Airport Terminal 2 (KLIA T2) between tomorrow and Tuesday to plan their journeys in advance.

The airline also encouraged guests to consider using alternative rail services such as the Express Rail Link (KLIA Express or KLIA Transit) in view of the 47th Asean Summit and related activities.

In a statement, AirAsia said police had earlier announced rolling closures and traffic diversions to and from KLIA T2, with dry runs taking place from Thursday to today.

"Guests are encouraged to allow more time for travel and arrive at least two hours before domestic flights and three hours before international flights.

"Major highways, including the KLIA Expressway, Elite Highway (KLIA–Putrajaya), MEX Expressway and KL–Seremban Expressway, may have temporary closures and diversions to make way for official motorcades," it said.

The airline added that check-in counters at KLIA T2 will close one hour before scheduled departure time. – Bernama

FOLLOW theSun Malaysian Paper ON FACEBOOK
/thesundaily
SCAN ME

Punitive practices do little to curb school violence: NGO

'Such measures send wrong message to students'

BY **KIRTINEE RAMESH**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Critics have said although Malaysian schools are failing to keep children safe, the national response is to reach for the cane instead of confronting deeper systemic breakdowns in protection and accountability.

Child advocacy group CRIB Foundation co-chairperson Srividhya Ganapathy has condemned what she described as a dangerous return to punitive practices that do little to prevent violence.

"Neither caning nor spot-checks would have prevented this incident, just as they would not have prevented the earlier stabbing or school rape cases.

"These are not discipline issues, they are failures of protection, supervision, threat assessment and escalation response."

She said violence in schools stems not from student misbehaviour but from systemic neglect.

"When a school cannot detect growing hostility, cannot provide a safe reporting channel, and cannot intervene early, violence is not 'misbehaviour.' It is the foreseeable outcome of institutional inaction."

While public frustration has grown over perceived indiscipline among students, Srividhya said the country risks confusing control with safety.

"Caning is a reaction after harm. Spot-checks are a display of control without actual prevention.

"In this rush for punitive optics, children, especially girls, are being forgotten.

"They are not experiencing protection. They are experiencing surveillance."

She added that such measures send the wrong message to students, particularly victims of bullying or gender-based violence.

"When the institutional response is to police students instead of protecting them, the message to children, especially girls, is not safety, it is blame.

"It tells them: 'You are part of the problem.' That is the point at which confidence in the system collapses."

She added that real prevention lies in safeguarding, not punishment.

Srividhya outlined five evidence-based measures that schools should adopt:

- teaching expected behaviour through modelling and clear routines, not intimidation;
- a transparent, predictable discipline framework applied uniformly, not arbitrarily;
- consequences that repair harm and build accountability, not humiliation or physical force;
- early intervention that detects escalation before a crisis point; and
- psychological and procedural safety for reporting, without backlash, ridicule or disbelief.

"This is not leniency. This is evidence-based risk management and safeguarding.

"If fear worked as protection, we would not still be seeing girls threatened, cornered and silenced. Fear does not prevent abuse, it conceals it."

She urged policymakers to move beyond nostalgia for punitive practices and instead build a "safeguarding architecture grounded in research, child rights and prevention".

"Malaysia stands at a policy crossroads," she said. "We could revert to punitive nostalgia, or we could build systems that actually protect children.

"The problem in our schools today is not too little caning, it is too little protection."

Education Minister Fadhlina Sidek recently defended caning as a necessary disciplinary tool, saying that while education should nurture and humanise learners, discipline remains essential to maintain a conducive environment.

"We must have some form of punishment in the context of enforcement," she said, adding that corporal punishment is still permitted under Malaysian law and governed by a strict standard operating procedure.

She also reiterated that schools must conduct regular spot-checks to curb mobile phone misuse, and urged parents to monitor their children's activities at home.

The latest incident in Kuching, where two boys allegedly bullied and threatened their female classmate, has renewed scrutiny of how schools detect and respond to warning signs of violence.

The case, now under investigation, is the third major incident to surface in as many days, underscoring what critics say is an urgent need for schools to prioritise protection over punishment.

New guidelines to transform handling of child sexual offences

BY **FAIZ RUZMAN**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Malaysia is overhauling the way child sexual offence cases are handled, placing victims' welfare and trauma recovery at the heart of the justice process, under the newly launched Special Guidelines for Handling Child Sexual Offences Against Children 2025.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Law and Institutional Reforms) Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said said the guidelines mark a shift from procedural compliance to child-centred justice, ensuring that investigations and trials are conducted ethically, sensitively and with minimal re-traumatisation.

"The updated guidelines emphasise four key components: ethical early reporting and investigation to minimise trauma for victims, child-friendly court procedures, including the use of video recordings and live-link testimony, the appointment of witness supporters or legal companions to assist victims and continuous psychosocial and post-trial rehabilitation support."

She said the document also calls for mandatory training across the justice chain, including police, investigators, prosecutors, judges, welfare officers and healthcare professionals, to ensure that cases are handled with consistency and compassion.

"While not yet legally binding, the guidelines would serve as a national reference point, harmonising best practices across agencies and paving the way for eventual gazettement as a mandatory procedure.

"Developed via consultations held between January and August, the framework adopts a trauma-informed justice approach to ensure that every child victim or witness receives protection, dignity and support throughout the legal process."

Among its key measures are clear procedures for reporting, investigation and courtroom handling, including video-recorded interviews at Child Interview Centres and in-camera proceedings to protect victims' identities.

Healthcare facilities must activate their Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect teams and One-Stop Crisis Centres within 72 hours of a report for medical and psychological evaluation.

Investigators and welfare officers are required to coordinate closely to prevent children from being questioned repeatedly.



Chief Judge of Malaya Tan Sri Hasnah Mohammed Hashim (left) and Azalina during the launch event for the special guidelines yesterday at the Palace of Justice in Putrajaya. – ***ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN***

The document also sets out new inter-agency standards, requiring joint case conferences between the police, welfare, health and prosecution departments to ensure a unified response.

In cases involving family members, authorities are instructed to remove perpetrators rather than victims from the household.

Azalina said to address the growing threat of online exploitation, the guidelines include protocols for handling digital evidence and cyber-enabled abuse, calling for close cooperation with the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission in cases involving social media and encrypted platforms.

She also said the reforms reflect a collective national commitment to making justice processes more humane for children.

"These guidelines ensure that every officer, from investigators to judges, understands their duty to protect children from further trauma while pursuing justice."

The guidelines build on the Evidence of Child Witness (Amendment) Act 2024 [Act 676], which came into force in March after being passed by the Dewan Rakyat on July 11 last year.

She added that the amended Act now serves as the primary legislation governing the rights and procedures of child witnesses in Malaysia's legal system, reinforcing the country's obligation to protect its youngest and most vulnerable citizens.

'Private school halls have event autonomy'

PUTRAJAYA: The Cabinet has ruled that current guidelines on the use of school facilities, including events serving alcoholic beverages, will remain unchanged, following concerns raised over recent remarks by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil said the decision came after clarification that some school facilities, particularly halls are either privately built or managed by independent bodies.

"On the issue of schools and events involving alcoholic beverages, the Cabinet was reminded and agreed that the existing guidelines and practices will remain in force without any changes," he said at a post-Cabinet press conference yesterday.

"The current guidelines and regulations continue to apply. The Cabinet was also informed that some Chinese vernacular schools receive full government aid while certain facilities are managed by the school boards or developed by private entities.

"There are specific considerations that apply particularly to (the schools) but further details can be referred to the statement that will be issued by the Education Ministry.

"Some of these schools have halls that are either managed by their boards or built by private parties."

Under current rules, school facilities may be used by external parties with prior approval, provided the activities do not conflict with the school's educational function.

This long-standing practice has allowed community and cultural events, including wedding receptions and fundraising dinners, to take place in vernacular school halls as long as alcohol is not served during school hours or to students.

The issue drew attention after Anwar said at Parliament on Thursday that school premises, even when rented to external organisers, are generally not intended for events involving alcohol or gambling, emphasising that schools should remain focused on education.

He added that the guidance was not meant to restrict the rights of non-Muslims but to uphold widely accepted standards of educational conduct and decorum.

DAP secretary-general Anthony Loke has since reportedly engaged with Anwar to address concerns raised by members of the Chinese Malaysian community who interpreted the prime minister's remarks as a challenge to long-standing customs.

DAP adviser and Bagan MP Lim Guan Eng said Loke's engagement seeks a compromise that respects the community's traditions.

"Anthony Loke understands the Chinese community's concerns and has taken the initiative to speak with the prime minister to seek a compromise that allows the community to continue its traditions and customs."

He added that Anwar's remarks created widespread unease within the community over perceived interference in social practices. – *By* ***Faiz Ruzman***

Data firms pledge to comply with local rules

PETALING JAYA: As Malaysia allocates RM2 billion under Budget 2026 to develop a Sovereign AI Cloud, major foreign cloud operators have pledged to comply with local data-governance rules, while emphasising that control over hosted data rests with clients.

Alibaba Cloud and Equinix, two of the largest international providers operating locally, said their Malaysian data centres are subject to national law and do not grant them access to customer information.

Alibaba Cloud Malaysia general manager Kun Huang said the company's three local data centres, including one launched in July, are built to meet national cybersecurity and data-sovereignty standards.

"We work with local partners to ensure that our cloud services are secure and compliant with national data-sovereignty regulations."

He added that Alibaba Cloud supports government initiatives such as the Sovereign AI Cloud and the National Centre for Cybersecurity and Cryptology Development, adding that demand for secure, locally governed infrastructure continues to grow.

Although Alibaba Cloud is not part of the federal Cloud Framework Agreement, which governs how sensitive government data is hosted, the company continues to collaborate with state-level agencies and local enterprises under programmes such as the Selangor Multi-Cloud Services initiative.

Equinix Malaysia managing director Cheam Tat Inn said the company's facilities in Kuala Lumpur and Johor are also designed to meet Malaysian regulatory standards.

"Equinix does not own, manage or access customer data. That authority remains entirely with the data owner.

If a foreign entity were to request access, the decision would rest with the data controller, not Equinix."

Cheam said digital sovereignty should not be defined solely by ownership, but by operational transparency and compliance.

"Digital trust is built on transparency, security and interoperability. By combining sovereign control with globally consistent infrastructure, Malaysia could scale its AI ambitions while safeguarding the integrity of its data." – *By* ***Faiz Ruzman***

'Reliance on foreign cloud providers poses risks'

Malaysia must accelerate efforts to develop secure, local systems: Experts

BY **FAIZ RUZMAN**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Experts have said Malaysia's growing dependence on foreign cloud providers such as Amazon Web Services, Microsoft and Google could weaken the nation's long-term control over its data and digital infrastructure.

Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) artificial intelligence expert Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Nor Akmal Khalid said much of the country's artificial intelligence (AI) and digital platforms are still hosted overseas, posing risks to national self-reliance and data sovereignty.

"In the long term, this is quite risky as foreign cloud platforms are exposed to external threats, both known and unknown.

Although transparency could be achieved, it discourages long-term self-reliance and results in more of our data being taken outside the country."

He said the country must accelerate cooperation between government, industry and academia to develop secure, locally managed systems.

"Reducing dependency on foreign systems remains slow as many local players, including major domestic providers, have yet to take sufficient action."

He urged Malaysia to transition from being a mere consumer of imported technology to a producer of homegrown AI solutions.

"We must develop competencies across all management levels and disciplines so that even non-technical professionals become AI-literate.

"This is the only way to move from (being) users to producers, and eventually pioneers, while ensuring our data and systems remain under Malaysian control."

Akmal added that overlapping ministerial responsibilities are hampering progress on national cloud initiatives.

"Agencies already have authority in this area, but the work is still fragmented at the national level and needs clearer direction.

"A special task force should be created to speed up coordination on the Sovereign AI Cloud project."

UKM digital economist Dr Stephanie Chuah said Malaysia remains "highly dependent" on global cloud firms for both public and commercial services, a situation that could hinder local innovation and control over sensitive data.

"Data stored on global platforms may be subject to the laws of the provider's home country. This makes it difficult for Malaysia to assert authority and may even allow foreign governments access to sensitive information."

She said the use of proprietary technologies by foreign firms also makes it difficult and costly to switch providers later.

"This reduces Malaysia's bargaining power and limits flexibility in adopting hybrid cloud solutions."

While acknowledging that foreign partnerships have spurred digital innovation and investment, she said long-term dependence would push value creation abroad.

"The infrastructure, intellectual property and data governance remain under foreign ownership. Much of the long-term value, profits, data insights and technological capabilities flow overseas."

Chuah suggested that Malaysia adopt a hybrid-sovereign cloud model, in which critical government and sensitive data are stored locally while less-sensitive tasks use global cloud platforms.

"Clear rules must govern cross-border data transfers and require foreign providers to maintain a local presence."

She also called for stronger policy coordination.

"The Digital Ministry should take operational leadership of the Sovereign AI Cloud, with the Communications Ministry focusing on regulation and cybersecurity.

"An inter-ministerial committee should coordinate both."



The Equinix building in Cyberjaya, headquarters of one of the largest international data firms that operate in Malaysia. – ***ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN***

Heavy rains cause floods to worsen in northern states

IPOH: Continuous heavy rain since Thursday has worsened the flood situation across several northern states, forcing thousands of residents to evacuate as authorities intensify rescue and relief operations.

In Perak, 2,171 people from 759 families have been moved to 22 temporary relief centres across the Larut, Matang and Selama (LMS) and Manjung districts as of 8am yesterday.

The State Disaster Management Committee said 19 centres in LMS are housing 1,784 evacuees, while three in Manjung are sheltering 387 residents. Active centres include Dewan Perdana Trong, Dewan Orang Ramai Sungai Baru, Masjid Al-Wusta Batu 8, SK Simpang and SK Batu Hampar in LMS, and SK Sungai Batu, SK Beruas and Sekolah Agama Rakyat Padang Serai in Manjung.

The Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) has forecast more rain and thunderstorms across LMS, Kerian, Manjung, Perak Tengah, Bagan Datuk and Hilir Perak. Three rivers – Kolam Bukit Merah, Sungai Kampar and Sungai Slim – have reached danger levels.

State Women Development, Family, Community Welfare, Entrepreneur Development and Cooperatives Committee chairman Datuk Salbiah Mohamed urged residents in flood-prone areas to move early for their own safety.

"I urge all residents in at-risk areas not to wait until the last minute to evacuate. The safety of our lives and families must come first. If instructed to relocate, proceed immediately to the nearest (relief centre)."

She said the Social Welfare Department and other rescue agencies were fully prepared, with shelters equipped with food, basic necessities, psychosocial support and coordinated volunteer aid.

"The Perak government assures that all affected residents would be properly cared for. NGOs or individuals wishing to contribute can contact the Flood Operations Control Centre in their respective districts."

Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Saarani Mohamad said the disaster management committee had been fully activated, with all state departments mobilised to expedite evacuation and rescue efforts.

"So far, 74 assets and vehicles from various agencies have been deployed, comprising 16 rescue boats, 25 lorries, 12 four-wheel drives, eight ambulances, 13 tents and other safety equipment such as life jackets and portable floodlights."

He said neighbouring district offices, including Kerian, Kuala Kangsar, Kinta and Hulu Perak, had also been mobilised to provide logistical support and manpower.

"Residents in affected areas must remain vigilant and comply with instructions from the authorities. Avoid activities near rivers, canals or overflow channels."

He added that essential supplies were being distributed in stages to ensure all relief centres received timely assistance, while additional assets were stationed at strategic locations for rapid response.

MetMalaysia forecasts continued rain and thunderstorms across the northern and central regions, with Perak, Kedah, Perlis and parts of Kelantan expected to experience intermittent downpours.

Authorities have urged the public to stay alert, follow weather updates and avoid flood-prone or riverbank areas as water levels continue to rise. – Bernama

FOLLOW theSun ON TELEGRAM
/thesuntelegram
SCAN ME

880,000 pornographic files seized

Nationwide sweep nets 31 individuals involved in selling, buying child sexual abuse material and illicit content

BY **FAIZ RUZMAN**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: More than 880,000 files of child sexual abuse material (CSAM) and adult pornography were uncovered in a nationwide sweep that saw 31 people, including minors and professionals, arrested under Op Pedo 2.0, a major operation against online child exploitation.

Inspector-General of Police Datuk Seri Mohd Khalid Ismail said the joint operation between police and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) revealed an alarming surge in the production and distribution of CSAM through social media and encrypted platforms.

"This crime not only threatens the safety and wellbeing of children but also undermines the moral fabric of society and has the potential to escalate into more violent offences," he told a press conference in Bukit Aman yesterday.

The operation, coordinated by senior assistant commissioner Siti Kamsiah Hassan, was carried out between Sept 22 and 30 at 37 locations nationwide.

It involved 206 officers and personnel from 14 police contingents and MCMC.

Of the 37 suspects identified, 31 were arrested, comprising 25 primary targets and six others.

Those arrested were males aged between 12 and 71, including teachers, engineers, graphic designers, cooks, students and unemployed individuals.

"Seventeen suspects have been charged in court between Sept 24 and Oct 10, while 14 others were released on bail," he said.

Authorities also seized 82 digital devices, including computers, mobile phones, modems and external drives.

Preliminary checks revealed a staggering 880,000 files linked to CSAM and adult pornography, a 20-fold increase from Op Pedo 1.0 last year, which uncovered 40,000 files.

Investigations also uncovered a 17-year-old suspect who allegedly earned RM76,000 within nine months by selling and distributing CSAM online.

"The presence of commercial elements shows that this crime is becoming more structured and financially motivated," Mohd Khalid said, describing the trend as "deeply alarming."

The suspects were found using platforms such as Telegram, WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, Tumblr, dark web channels and cloud storage to access, share and monetise illicit material.

Some acted as administrators, offering paid access to CSAM via e-wallet and QR code transactions.

Police have opened 29 investigation papers under various laws, including sections 8 and 10 of the Sexual Offences Against Children Act 2017, Section 292 of the Penal Code and Section 6(1)(c) of the Immigration Act 1959/63.

Of these, 15 cases have received prosecution orders involving 17 individuals.

Fifteen pleaded guilty and were fined between RM1,000 and RM10,000, while two cases would proceed to trial.

Mohd Khalid stressed that online sexual exploitation of minors is a grave offence that will be met with uncompromising enforcement.

"Police will continue to strengthen strategic cooperation with MCMC and both local and international enforcement agencies to ensure children are protected from exploitation, abuse and discrimination," he said.

"Those who trade in the dignity and safety of our children will face firm and decisive action."

Technical probe to be conducted on Penang landslide

BALIK PULAU: A detailed technical investigation into the landslide along Jalan Tun Sardon (Bukit Baru) will be carried out once cleanup works at the site have been completed, said Penang Infrastructure, Transport and Digital Committee chairman Zairil Khir Johari.

He said the priority was to complete the clearance works being conducted by a Public Works Department (PWD) appointed contractor so that the route can be reopened to vehicles, adding that the road is fully closed to all traffic until 6pm today.

"Preliminary investigations confirmed that the landslide and slope failure were caused by heavy rain.

"Repair and mitigation measures, including (the costs involved), will be (discussed) after receiving reports from technical agencies," he said after surveying the landslide site yesterday with state PWD director Datuk Ahmad Nadzri Abdul Majid.

Zairil said the site is still unsafe due to soil movement caused by water seepage, but continuous monitoring is being carried out.

He added that in addition to the slope collapse at Km5.10 of Jalan Tun Sardon, the stretch of road also recorded 15 damaged slopes, seven fallen trees, four rockfalls and one instance of road subsidence.

"A critical landslide was also reported along the federal road near Titi Kerawang Bendera, resulting in part of the road being closed."

Zairil said overall, 31 fallen tree incidents were reported to the Penang Island City Council, with immediate action taken in collaboration with the Fire and Rescue Department, Civil Defence Force, the council rapid response team, Geotechnical Division, Northeast and Southwest district PWD and police.

He advised road users to be vigilant and drive cautiously, especially during heavy rain, adding that the public may contact the council hotline at 016-200 4082, PWD disaster hotline at 03-2610 7727 or lodge reports via the Pearl Apps.

It was earlier reported that the landslide along Jalan Tun Sardon occurred at about 4.30pm, causing trees to fall and block the road.

The incident was captured on a dashboard camera, showing the driver stopping abruptly and narrowly avoiding the landslide. – Bernama



Zairil said works are ongoing to quickly clear debris to facilitate reopening of the road. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



'Walk-a-Payung' draws hundreds for good cause

BY **JOSHUA CHANG**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

Purple umbrellas signify solidarity with lupus patients who need to shield their sensitive bodies from sunlight.

KOTA KINABALU: In a heart-warming display of community spirit, the Walk-a-Payung event made a triumphant return to Sandakan on Oct 19 after a nine-year hiatus, rallying the public around the cause of lupus awareness.

The poignant occasion saw 800 people registering, with over 400 taking part in a symbolic walk through the streets, to stand in solidarity with individuals living with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE).

Organised by the Persatuan SLE Malaysia (PSLEM) – Sabah Chapter in collaboration with the Lions Club of Sandakan Selingan, it transformed the grounds of SMK Convent St Cecilia, the gathering point, into a vibrant sea of purple.

The colour symbolises lupus awareness, representing courage, hope and healing.

Participants clad in purple T-shirts and holding matching umbrellas created a powerful visual statement of solidarity.

The event was officiated by Sandakan MP Vivian Wong Shir Yee, who commended the organisers for their dedication towards patient welfare and public education.

"This programme is not only about fundraising but also about fostering empathy. Walking together under umbrellas poignantly reflects both the daily reality of lupus patients, who must shield themselves from sunlight, and the unity, compassion and hope that define our caring community," Wong said.

PSLEM Sabah Chapter president Geoffrey Sinn Chun Hou expressed gratitude to the sponsors, donors, partners and volunteers whose support made the event possible.

"Walk-a-Payung is more than an awareness event, it is a movement of empathy and understanding," he said.

"Every open umbrella today represents love, protection and hope for the lupus community. We are deeply moved by Sandakan's overwhelming support."

Following the flag-off, the streets came alive with a vibrant parade of purple umbrellas, a colourful testament to the community's resilience and togetherness.

The morning was filled with engaging activities, including a free community health screening which saw tremendous public response as volunteer doctors and specialists offered complimentary basic checks and health counselling.

An umbrella decoration contest fostered teamwork among patients, their families and the public who participated as prizes sponsored by generous donors were presented.

A lively Zumba warm-up and exciting lucky draws infused the event with energy and joy.

First introduced in Sandakan in 2012, the Walk-a-Payung campaign garnered overwhelming response in its 2016 edition and has since remained PSLEM Sabah Chapter's signature awareness and fundraising programme.

Its successful return this year reaffirmed the profound power of compassion and community, walking together under one umbrella of love and hope.



Sinn (centre) and Wong (2nd right) leading the walk with members of the organising committee.

Ipoh Barat school students get Deepavali aid from foundation

BY **P. CHANDRA SAGARAN**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

IPOH: Berjaya Cares Foundation brought cheers to 625 Indian students from 23 secondary schools with a total cash contribution of RM250,000 under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiative .

The presentation was made during a Sumbangan Kasih Madani ceremony in conjunction with the recent Deepavali festival.

Each student received RM400 to help them in their studies by attending tuition classes and motivational talks, and purchasing educational aids. The pupils included those sitting for the SPM examinations soon.

A mock cheque for the amount was presented by Berjaya Group Berhad Executive Director Shashitharan Nair to Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming who officiated the event at the Sri Maha Mariamman Temple Hall in Jalan Sungai Pari, Buntong here on Oct 4.

Nga thanked the foundation for making the meaningful contribution to the students from B40 low-income families.

The financial aid to the Form Four, Five and Six students was for schools located in the Ipoh Barat constituency, which covers the areas of Buntong, Kepayang and Bercham.

The temple also received a boost as the minister announced an allocation of RM100,000 to upgrade its hall.

Meanwhile, Buntong state assemblywoman Thulsi Manogaran said: "It took a month for my team to identify eligible students from the B40 group as well as those who are hardcore poor."

Some 1,500 people, including students and parents, attended the event, she added.



Shashitharan (4th left), Nga (5th left) and Thulsi (6th left) posing with some of the recipients. – ***P. CHANDRA SAGARAN/THESUN***



Kugan (2nd left) presents a copy of the new publication to Norlijah during the launch.

Mangrove conservation guide to counter habitat loss

BY **JOSHUA CHANG**
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KOTA KINABALU: The Sabah Forestry Department (SFD), in collaboration with the International Society for Mangrove Ecosystems (ISME), has launched a landmark publication that establishes a new global benchmark for the management and restoration of mangrove forests.

Titled "Mangroves of Sabah: A Legacy of Resilience and Restoration", the comprehensive volume was unveiled here on Oct 22 at the International Conference of Borneo's Green Heart.

The event, which set the stage for discussing climate resilience and sustainable livelihoods, was officiated by Deputy State Secretary (Administration) Datuk Norlijah Danin.

The book encapsulates the success of the SFD-ISME collaborative project, translating years of pioneering research and on-ground expertise into a practical framework for safeguarding one of Southeast Asia's most vital ecosystems.

Sabah's mangroves are recognised not only for their remarkable biodiversity but also for their critical role as a natural climate solution, sequestering carbon at impressive rates and providing protection for coastal communities.

"In an era of escalating climate challenges, this book transitions from a scholarly work to an essential tool for action," said Sabah Chief Conservator of Forests Datuk Frederick Kugan.

"It provides a clear, evidence-based pathway for replicating Sabah's success in mangrove restoration globally."

He expressed appreciation to ISME and corporate partner Tokio Marine & Nichido Fire Insurance Co. Ltd. for their support in bringing the critical project to fruition.

The publication is positioned to serve as an indispensable resource for environmental agencies, researchers and NGOs worldwide, offering scalable strategies to counter the pervasive threats of habitat loss and climate change.

It also marks a significant contribution to global environmental discourse, showcasing Sabah's leadership in tropical conservation.

ISME is a global non-profit organisation committed to advancing the conservation, sustainable management and scientific understanding of mangrove ecosystems through international collaboration and knowledge exchange.



Japan 'deportation ministry' rumour spreads online

Minister says country would strictly handle foreigners who break rules, but no mention of expulsions

TOKYO: False claims that Japan's new prime minister has created a ministry for "mass deportations" have been widely spread online as immigration misinformation swirls after a "Japanese first" party did well in elections earlier this year.

The rumours circulating on X and Facebook, largely in English, say Japan's first woman premier Sanae Takaichi, who was sworn in this week, asked Minister of State for Economic Security Kimi Onoda to lead the new ministry.

Onoda was on Tuesday tapped for a number of roles, chiefly economic security minister and minister in charge of a "society of well-ordered and harmonious coexistence with foreign nationals".

A department with the same name was created under Takaichi's predecessor Shigeru Ishiba, but the appointment of a Cabinet minister to supervise it is new.

At a press conference on Wednesday, Onoda said Japan would "strictly handle foreign nationals who do not follow the rules", but there was no mention of mass deportations.

"The inappropriate use of various systems by some foreign residents, their crimes and misbehaviour are causing anxiety and a sense of unfairness among Japanese people."

Immigration levels in Japan remain low compared with other rich economies, but with an ageing population, one of the world's lowest birth rates and worker shortages in many industries, the number of immigrants is increasing.

The rising number of foreigners, including tourists, was a major issue in the race for the ruling Liberal Democratic Party leadership earlier this month, which Takaichi won before being elected prime minister.

Takaichi accused foreigners of kicking deer in her hometown Nara.

One of the widely circulated posts on X said Takaichi was "sworn in and immediately created a ministry for mass deportations", and received more than nine million views.

Another video spread on Facebook falsely claimed that Japan's emperor had approved "the nationwide deportation plan".

The false claims were also circulated in Thai, German and Spanish.

They come after a Japanese cultural and social exchange programme with four African nations was cancelled last month, after it triggered floods of emails and phone calls from people falsely believing it was a new immigration policy.

Also last month, Kitakyushu city reportedly received complaints after inaccurate claims that it had planned Muslim-friendly school lunches.

In July, the anti-immigration Sanseito party did well in upper house elections, growing its seat tally to 15 from two. In the lower chamber, it has three MPs.

Its agenda echoes other populist movements, railing against "elitism" and "globalism", and saying it would "bring power back to the people". – AFP

Thai election likely on March 29, says govt

BANGKOK: The likely date for a general election in Thailand is March 29, a senior government official told Reuters yesterday after Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul discussed the issue with the country's Election Commission.

Anutin earlier said he plans to dissolve parliament by the end of January, with a general election to follow in March or early April.

"The government and the Election Commission have discussed the timeframe for holding the election," said Paradorn Prissananantakul, a minister attached to the Prime Minister's Office.

He also said a referendum on a new Constitution and another to decide on whether to revoke two agreements concerning border demarcation with Cambodia would likely take place alongside the general election.

The Election Commission has yet to set the election date but its chairman Ittiporn Boonpracong said the details would be worked out on the poll vote and the two referendums, which would likely take place on the same day.

The estimated budget for the election and referendums would stand at THB$9 billion (RM1.16 billion) and about 53 million Thais are eligible to participate, said Ittiporn.

Anutin won a parliamentary vote in early September to become Thailand's third prime minister since August 2023.

To win power, he secured the backing of the opposition People's Party, but calling an election within four months of taking office and holding a referendum on a new Constitution were two conditions of its support. – Reuters



Kim greeting soldiers at the groundbreaking ceremony in Pyongyang. – ***REUTERSPIC***

N. Korea building memorial for troops

SEOUL: North Korea has begun building a memorial for soldiers killed fighting in the war between Russia and Ukraine, state media said yesterday, with leader Kim Jong Un hailing a "historic peak" in ties with Moscow.

The so-called Memorial Museum of Combat Feats would be built in the capital Pyongyang, where Kim and Russia's ambassador to North Korea attended a groundbreaking ceremony, according to the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA).

Kim said the museum "is a sacred sanctuary dedicated to the immortality of true patriots".

North Korea has sent thousands of soldiers and container loads of weapons to help the Kremlin push Ukrainian forces out of western Russia.

At least 600 North Korean soldiers have been killed and thousands more wounded, according to estimates from South Korea.

In remarks carried by KCNA, Kim praised the troops for helping Russia achieve a "decisive victory".

"Our heroes destroyed the fiendish neo-Nazi invaders with their staunch spirit to not tolerate any aggression but to annihilate the aggressors.

"Pyongyang will always be with Moscow. Our friendship and unity will last forever," said Kim.

He also said the memorial would feature sculptures dedicated to the North Korean soldiers who fought in Russia, as well as photos and artwork portraying the combat.

Moscow's ambassador to North Korea Aleksandr Matsegora and other Russian embassy officials attended Thursday's ceremony, KCNA reported.

Several North Korean government and military officials were also present, along with families of soldiers who have died in Russia.

Images released by state media showed Kim embracing visibly emotional soldiers at the ceremony in Pyongyang.

Russia and North Korea last year agreed to a strategic partnership agreement that obligates each side to provide "military and other assistance" should either of them be attacked.

In Moscow, an art exhibition has been held to celebrate ties with Pyongyang, depicting North Korean soldiers and their Russian comrades resisting a hostile West.

North Korea confirmed that it had deployed troops to support Russia's war in Ukraine in April, and that its soldiers had been killed in combat.

Washington has said there is evidence that Russia is stepping up support for North Korea, including providing help on advanced space and satellite technology, in return for its assistance in fighting Ukraine. – AFP

Indonesia moves residents from radioactive site

JAKARTA: The Indonesian government has started relocating residents living in areas surrounding the Modern Cikande Industrial Estate, a site found to have been contaminated with radioactive Caesium-137, a spokesperson told Reuters yesterday.

The effort was initiated after Indonesia detected high levels of Caesium-137, a man-made radionuclide, at the industrial zone near the capital Jakarta.

"At this first stage, we are allocating 19 families with a total of 63 individuals. Why now? Because it is time to clean up their houses from contamination," said special task force spokesperson Bara Hasibuan.

In the next stage, the task force aims to move another eight families with a total of 28 people by next week, he added.

The task force also said it has finished the decontamination process at 20 of the 22 facilities at the industrial estate that contained traces of Caesium-137.

The contamination was first detected in a batch of shrimp shipped to the United States in August by a local company.

The United States has imposed new certification requirements for imports of shrimp and spices from Indonesia.

Indonesia has no nuclear weapons or nuclear power plants. – Reuters

Worker sued over 'theft' of snacks in Seoul

SEOUL: A worker accused of "stealing" snacks worth less than a dollar in South Korea has been embroiled in a more than year-long legal battle.

The subcontracted delivery driver for a logistics firm is charged with theft for taking a Choco Pie and a mini custard worth KRW$1,050 (RM3) from an office fridge last year.

Prosecutors deemed the offence minor and filed a summary indictment, but the driver said he is innocent and requested a formal trial.

The defendant claimed that other drivers had told him that "there are snacks in the fridge, feel free to eat them", according to court documents.

But the firm argued that drivers were not allowed to "open the refrigerator without permission", unless they were offered snacks.

A court found him guilty and fined him KRW$50,000, around fifty times the value of what he had eaten.

The worker immediately appealed, with a new trial kicking off last month.

Experts have told local media that the legal fees paid by the defendant could amount to roughly 10,000 times the value of the snacks eaten.

The case has sparked public outcry in South Korea, with labour unions comparing the worker with French classic novel "Les Miserables" protagonist Jean Valjean, who is jailed for stealing bread to feed his siblings.

It was even raised in a heated parliamentary debate this week.

The next hearing is scheduled next week, with two witnesses for the defence set to testify. – AFP

'No crazy war, please'

Maduro issues plea for peace amid Trump campaign against drugs

CARACAS: As tensions mount between Washington and Caracas, Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro on Thursday launched a plea in English as he said: "No crazy war, please!"

Maduro's comment comes after US President Donald Trump said he has authorised covert action against the South American nation, and amid an escalating US military campaign against alleged drug traffickers in the Caribbean and Pacific.

"Yes, peace, yes, peace forever, peace forever. No crazy war, please," he said in a meeting with unions aligned with the leftist leader.

The United States has deployed stealth warplanes and navy ships as part of what it calls anti-narcotics efforts, but has yet to release evidence that its targets were smuggling drugs.

Regional tensions have flared as a result of the campaign, with Maduro accusing Washington of seeking regime change.

On Thursday, the government in Trinidad and Tobago, located just off Venezuela's coast, announced that a US warship would dock in its capital from tomorrow until Thursday.

The Trinidad Foreign Ministry said a unit of US Marines would conduct joint exercises with its defence forces.

Two of those killed in the US strikes were from Trinidad and Tobago.

Last week, Trump said he has authorised covert CIA action against Venezuela and was considering strikes against alleged drug cartels on land.

He accuses Maduro of heading a drug cartel, a charge the Venezuelan leader denies.

"We know the CIA is present" in Venezuela, said Defence Minister Vladimir Padrino on Thursday.

"They may deploy I do not know how many CIA-affiliated units in covert operations and any attempt will fail."

Padrino was overseeing military exercises along Venezuela's coast in response to the US military deployment in the Caribbean.

Experts have questioned the legality of using lethal force in foreign or international waters against suspects who have not been intercepted or questioned.

In a separate reaction to the US campaign, Colombian President Gustavo Petro on Thursday denounced the US military attacks against vessels allegedly loaded with drugs in the eastern Pacific and the Caribbean as "extrajudicial executions", Xinhua reported.

In "this type of manoeuvre, which we believe violates international law, the United States is committing extrajudicial executions", he said.

The suspected drug traffickers should be brought to justice, not murdered, he added.

The US military carried out two strikes against alleged drug-trafficking boats in the eastern Pacific this week, killing all on board each vessel, according to US Defence Secretary Pete Hegseth.

The attacks were reportedly executed near Colombia's Pacific coast.

The US military has conducted seven such operations in the Caribbean Sea since September, mainly against boats accused of trafficking drugs from Venezuela to the United States.

The death toll in the US boat strikes has risen to at least 37. – AFP



RESISTANCE RALLY ... Demonstrators at Embarcadero Plaza on Thursday holding a banner during a protest against the planned deployment of federal agents in San Francisco, California. – ***REUTERSPIC***

US airports issue ground stops amid govt shutdown

WASHINGTON: Multiple major airports in the United States on Thursday issued ground stops or delays amid air traffic controller staffing shortages, reflecting the widening effects of the ongoing federal government shutdown, now in its 23rd day, reported Xinhua.

Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, just outside the US capital, issued a ground delay programme while Newark Liberty International Airport in New Jersey, LaGuardia Airport in New York and George Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston issued ground stops due to staffing, temporarily halting all departures.

According to information from the Federal Aviation Administration, departures to Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport were delayed for an average of 31 minutes as of 9.30pm on Thursday (0130 GMT yesterday).

Data from FlightAware showed that over 5,000 flights within, into or out of the United States have been delayed, with 80 cancellations.

Starting this month, some 13,000 air traffic controllers and 50,000 Transportation Security Administration (TSA) employees have continued working without pay.

TSA is responsible for security screening at US airports.

As two parties continue to trade blame and accusations, there is a growing possibility that the government shutdown could drag on into November, even the holiday season.

"We fear there would be significant flight delays, disruptions and cancellations in major airports across the country this holiday season," said White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt on Thursday. – Bernama-Xinhua

Europe must manage health resources after aid cuts: WHO

COPENHAGEN: Drastic aid cuts have made it vital for Europe to better manage health resources, World Health Organisation (WHO) Europe Director Hans Kluge told AFP.

"We have a huge challenge because the majority of our programmes were funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the United States."

Since taking office in January, US President Donald Trump has slashed US international aid and effectively dismantled USAID, the world's largest humanitarian aid agency.

Kluge said WHO is experiencing an "existential" crisis, with countries such as Britain, France, Germany and the United States, contributing significantly less.

Despite a 20% budget cut, WHO Europe wants to boost its role within domestic European health administrations.

"The WHO Europe of the future is healthier, trusted, evidence-based and politically neutral."

Kluge's plan is based on restructuring the organisation and prioritising its missions.

He said WHO Europe needs a "dual track" approach to "manage a current crisis" while keeping "core public health programmes operational".

Europe must also address its mental health problem, aggravated by war, loneliness, anxiety and the aftermath of the pandemic, he said.

One European in six and one child in five would experience mental health problems at some point in their life, according to WHO.

Kluge said his organisation also needs to address worrying regional trends, including youth addiction, a lack of online protection, the climate crisis and non-infectious diseases.

"We could channel our few resources in those directions." – AFP

German on trial for seven murder attempts on wife

NUREMBERG: A German man went on trial on Thursday on charges of attempted murder after allegedly poisoning his wife seven times, including with a frozen pizza, German Press Agency reported.

The 56-year-old also faces charges of grievous bodily harm at the Bamberg Regional Court in the southern city of Bamberg.

According to the indictment, the man started a relationship with another woman online in 2022 and promised her a future together and children.

In order to be free for his new life, he allegedly decided to kill his wife in the summer of 2023.

According to the investigation, the accused searched "deadly poison for humans" and "aconite poisoning detectable" on Google.

He allegedly ordered several plant poisons to his workplace.

The public prosecutor's office accuses him of seven attempts to poison his spouse between August 2023 and December 2024.

The woman survived each time, but was hospitalised in some cases and had to have a pacemaker fitted as a result of the poisoning.

During the last attempt in December 2024, the 56-year-old is said to have poisoned a frozen pizza that his wife and son ate.

The poison caused them to suffer massive cardiac arrhythmia. They only survived thanks to the rapid intervention of emergency doctors and paramedics.

The man is said to have committed the acts "without any great tension and without any compassion".

The following weekend, the accused travelled to France with his acquaintance, where he was arrested.

Investigators found remnants of the various plant poisons during searches. – Bernama-dpa

EU backs age limits for social media use

BRUSSELS: European Union (EU) leaders have spoken out in favour of introducing age limits for access to social media platforms, but made it clear they do not intend to hand over their national competences on the issue to Brussels, German Press Agency reported.

"The European Council stresses the importance of protecting minors, including through a digital age of majority for accessing social media, respecting national competences," a statement adopted at an EU summit in Brussels on Thursday read.

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen recently gave new momentum to the debate with her call for an EU-wide minimum age for using social media.

A group of experts is to present recommendations on the best way forward by the end of the year.

More can and must be done to better protect children online, a commission spokesperson said.

Von der Leyen has compared possible age limits for social media with restrictions on tobacco and alcohol consumption.

She also pointed to Australia, where parliament passed legislation in November 2024 restricting access to social media for children and teenagers.

Under the new rules, only users aged 16 and over would be allowed to access the platforms. The measure is set to take effect in December.

The European Commission is working on the technical foundations for age restrictions.

It is developing a verification app aimed at protecting minors online. The goal is to create reliable age verification systems for content not suitable for minors. – Bernama-dpa

US$7b needed to rebuild Gaza healthcare

MOSCOW: Rebuilding the Gaza Strip healthcare system would cost at least USD$7 billion (RM29 billion), said World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Sputnik/RIA Novosti said.

Not a single hospital in Gaza is functioning normally and only 14 remain operational, he said on Thursday, adding that there is a critical shortage of medicines, equipment and personnel.

He also called on other countries to more actively accept patients from Gaza for treatment.

According to WHO, 15,000 people require medical evacuation, including 4,000 children, and 700 people have died while awaiting medical evacuation.

US President Donald Trump's 20-point Gaza peace plan called for an immediate ceasefire, contingent on the release of hostages within 72 hours.

The document also proposed that Hamas or other Palestinian armed factions should have no role in governing the Gaza Strip and that control of the enclave should be transferred to a technocratic committee supervised by an international body led by Trump.

On Oct 9, Israel and Hamas reached an agreement on the implementation of the first phase of the peace plan to resolve the two-year armed conflict in Gaza.

Hamas released all 20 of the surviving hostages who had been held in Gaza since Oct 7, 2023.

In exchange, Israel released 1,718 Palestinian detainees from Gaza and 250 Palestinian prisoners held in Israeli jails. – Bernama-Sputnik/RIA Novosti

Restoring Syria vital for regional stability: UN

GENEVA: After 14 years of destruction, Syria must be swiftly rebuilt to bring stability to the country and the wider region, said United Nations (UN) Development Programme Deputy Representative in Syria Rawhi Afaghani.

Reconstruction is a big challenge facing Syria's new Islamist authorities after the overthrow of longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad last December.

The Syrian civil war, which erupted in 2011 with Assad's brutal repression of anti-government protests, killed over half a million people and devastated the country's infrastructure.

The World Bank this week estimated that Syria's postwar reconstruction could cost up to US$216 billion (RM912 billion).

Afaghani said across the country, governors have told him about the massive need for housing, schools, health centres, electricity and water.

Complicating the cleanup efforts are the vast quantities of unexploded ordnance littering the entire country, including within mountains of rubble that need to be cleared, he said.

More than one million Syrian refugees have returned from abroad and nearly double as many have returned to their places of origin after being displaced inside the country, UN figures showed.

Afaghani warned that while those returns are a good sign, they are "putting a lot of pressure on the infrastructure, on the transportation, on the education".

However, he voiced hope that swift reconstruction could usher in "a stable Syria", which in turn would draw more returns from Europe. – AFP

Hamas begins dialogue with Palestinian factions

GAZA: Palestinian group Hamas said on Thursday it is entering a national dialogue with all Palestinian factions, Anadolu Ajansi reported.

The announcement coincided with a meeting in Cairo between delegations from Hamas and Fatah, under Egyptian mediation, to discuss the second phase of the Gaza ceasefire agreement and the future of the enclave.

In an interview with Anadolu, Hamas spokesperson Hazem Qassem said the movement is "heading into national dialogue with open hearts and extended hands to the Palestinian Authority and other national forces", stressing that the authority "is one of the Palestinian institutions that cannot be bypassed".

> Authorities urged to align with prevailing national consensus in Gaza and come to talks with open mind

Qassem urged for authorities to "align with the prevailing national consensus in Gaza and come to the dialogue with an open mind", recognising that "this is a time for national unity and prioritising the national interest over narrow partisan interests".

He warned that "the current period is dangerous not only for Hamas, but also for the entire Palestinian people in Gaza and the West Bank".

He reaffirmed the movement's full commitment to implementing the Gaza ceasefire agreement "in all its details", urging mediators to pressure Israel to ensure compliance.



Palestinians receiving food outside the damaged Imam al Shafi'i Mosque, where families have taken shelter, in the Zeitoun neighbourhood of Gaza. – ***AFPPIC***

He added that Hamas has been holding "around-the-clock discussions to complete the agreement and taking major field steps to implement what has been agreed upon".

According to Qassem, Hamas received clear guarantees from Turkiye, Egypt and Qatar, as well as direct assurances from the United States, that "the war has effectively ended" and implementing the agreement terms "constitutes its full conclusion".

He said Hamas has completed the first phase of the agreement by handing over living captives and some remains, and is working to deliver the rest.

Qassem said regarding the second phase, it "requires further discussions and clarifications with mediators", explaining that "this stage involves broad issues and complex matters that need detailed approaches".

He stressed that the central objective of Hamas "is to reach a complete and lasting end to the war against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip".

He also said the movement continues to inform mediators of Israeli violations, noting that Israel has killed 90 Palestinians since the ceasefire took effect and "still keeps the Rafah crossing closed, blocking sufficient aid".

He accused Israel of using "humanitarian conditions as a political bargaining chip", something Israel "has practiced for years under the Gaza blockade", and called for urgent action to allow aid into the Strip and prevent starvation.

The first phase of Trump's 20-point Gaza ceasefire deal was reached on Oct 10.

Phase one includes the release of Israeli hostages in exchange for Palestinian prisoners. The plan also envisages the rebuilding of Gaza and the establishment of a new governing mechanism without Hamas. – Bernama-Anadolu

UK to press Europe for more missiles for Ukraine

LONDON: Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelensky headed to London yesterday for a meeting of its key backers, and Britain's prime minister has said he would call on Europe to deliver more long-range missiles.

Kyiv's Western allies have ratcheted up pressure on Moscow as the war enters its fourth winter, with the United States and European Union (EU) announcing new sanctions this week on Russian energy aimed at crippling its war economy.

EU leaders also took steps towards funding Ukraine's defence for another two years, although they stopped short of greenlighting a mammoth "reparations loan" backed by frozen Russian assets.

Yesterday, British Prime Minister Keir Starmer was set to call on allies to "step up the gifting of long-range capabilities to ensure Ukraine could build on its success of this week", his office said in a statement ahead of the meeting of the so-called "coalition of the willing".

Nato Secretary-General Mark Rutte, Denmark Prime Minister Mette Frederiksen and Netherlands Prime Minister Dick Schoof are expected to attend the London summit, with other leaders, such as French President Emmanuel Macron, joining virtually.

Starmer's call for more missiles comes after Zelensky failed to secure long-range Tomahawks during a recent visit to Washington, despite multiple pleas for the weapons he says Ukraine needs to hit targets deep inside Russia.

The war continues to grind on despite US and European efforts to force Russian President Vladimir Putin to the negotiating table, with Moscow battering Ukraine's energy grid this week in deadly drone and missile attacks.

Starmer would also urge European leaders to "finish the job on Russian sovereign assets to unlock billions of pounds to fund Ukraine's defences", according to the statement.

It comes a day after EU leaders tasked the European Commission to move ahead with options for funding Ukraine for two more years, leaving the door open for a EUR$140 billion (RM686 billion) "reparations loan".

The EU froze about EUR$200 billion of Russian central bank assets after the war began, and the European Commission has proposed using the funds to provide a huge loan to Kyiv, without seizing them outright.

But the plan has faced strong objections from Belgium, where the bulk of the frozen Russian assets are held.

The broadly worded conclusions of Thursday's summit in Brussels, adopted by all member states with the exception of Hungary, did not mention the loan directly, instead inviting the commission "to present, as soon as possible, options for financial support".

Zelensky welcomed the outcome as a signal of "political support" for the notion of using Russian assets to keep Kyiv in the fight.

European Council President Antonio Costa said the bloc has "committed to ensure Ukraine's financial needs would be covered for the next two years". – AFP

SCAN ME

the Sun Biz & Finance

SATURDAY | OCT 25, 2025

Editorial
T: 03-7784 6688
F: 03-7785 2625
E: *sunbiz@thesundaily.com*

Advertising
T: 03-7784 8888
E: *advertise@thesundaily.com*

'More unified, integrated bloc will have greater negotiating clout'

KUALA LUMPUR: A more unified and integrated Asean will have greater clout and bargaining power in international trade negotiations, even against the likes of economic superpowers such as the United States, said an economist.

University of Nottingham Malaysia assistant professor of business economics Dr Tan Chee Meng, said economic integration is very important for Asean to safeguard its interests in global trade deals.

"If you're seen as a lonely island, you don't have the power to tell the US or any major government what you want. So, this is why US President (Donald Trump) is very interested in using unilateral negotiations."

Tan, who is a regular commentator on Asean affairs, was alluding to Asean countries negotiating Washington's debilitating tariffs on their own rather than as a unified bloc.

"He (Trump) knows that if he's doing it one-on-one, he'll probably get the most benefit for the US. But if he's negotiating with a bloc, it becomes more difficult because a bloc has more power," he said, responding to questions posed by host Nadiah Abdul Latif on Bernama TV's *The Nation Asean+* programme in a segment entitled, "Investing In Asean: The Next Decade of Regional Growth".

Tan said the upcoming summit will allow Asean to strengthen coordination, enhance investor confidence and deepen economic integration to sustain its attractiveness to foreign investment.

"While Asean's vision of deeper integration by 2045 is a bold ambition, it is essential if the region hopes to compete as a unified market. Asean has a lot of potential for investors. China sees great potential here as well, with many of its companies setting up operations in the region," he added.

However, Tan cautioned that investor enthusiasm should be matched by sound governance and consistent policies across the bloc. "Investors want to be here, but do we have the right regulations? Are we coordinating things correctly in a way that gives them confidence? That's something we need to look into."

Tan said the biggest challenge lies in policy coordination and consistency both across and within Asean member states.

"Coordination is the issue because you're looking at 10 different countries. Do all of them have the same laws that govern foreign investment? Within each country, policies can also change with different administrations. That creates uncertainty," he added.

Tan said Asean can enhance its cohesiveness by harmonising governance structures and ensuring transparency.

Asean aims to sign digital economy pact next year

KUALA LUMPUR: Asean is confident of clearing an actionable path towards a timely conclusion of the Asean Digital Economy Framework Agreement (Defa) by 2026, which will reaffirm the region's role in shaping the global digital economy, said Investment, Trade and Industry Minister Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul Abdul Aziz.

He said Asean aims to substantially conclude the Defa negotiations this year and have it signed in 2026.

"As of now, we have achieved more than 70% (in negotiations)," he told reporters after chairing the Asean Economic Community Council (AECC) Special Session on Defa here yesterday.

The minister said the special session provides a timely platform for member states to take stock of the progress made in the deal negotiations and, more importantly, to deliberate on two critical issues that require policy guidance.

> Negotiations to be concluded this year, more than 70% achieved so far: Tengku Zafrul

"The issues are the treatment of customs duties on electronic transmissions and the application of financial services commitments with respect to the location of computing facilities," he said.

Tengku Zafrul said Asean will also receive an update on the work plan towards the full conclusion of Defa, which will serve as a strategic roadmap for the region's continued collective efforts, by 2026.

"Following the 14th Defa Negotiating Committee meeting held earlier this month, I am encouraged by the steady and tangible progress achieved since our first special session on Aug 28, 2025. The ongoing work of the negotiating committee reflects our shared commitment to deliver Defa as one of Malaysia's Priority Economic Deliverables (PED) for this year."

Tengku Zafrul said it is heartening to note the growing convergence among Asean member states across several chapters, driven by the strong coordination of the Defa Negotiating Committee and the valuable support of the Asean Secretariat.

However, he noted that the issues before the region remain complex and will require strategic guidance and political direction to ensure that negotiations advance in a balanced, pragmatic and forward-looking manner.

"Defa is not only about accelerating digital trade and innovation, but also about ensuring inclusivity and equitable participation so that our micro, small and medium enterprises, startups and communities across Asean can fully benefit from a trusted, secure and interoperable digital ecosystem.

"In this spirit, let us be guided by Asean's enduring principles of consensus, inclusivity and mutual benefit, while remaining bold and forward-looking in our ambition to deliver a high-quality, future-ready Defa that reflects both the dynamism and diversity of our region," he added.

The AECC Special Session, organised by the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry (Miti), was held in conjunction with the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits taking place from Oct 26 to 28, 2025, at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Meanwhile, Tengku Zafrul said Malaysia has completed 17 out of the 18 PED set for 2025, while the remaining is expected to be completed soon.

The report regarding the PED will be presented to Asean leaders for adoption and notation.

"We have finished the PEDs, and we are going to send our report to the leaders for their adoption and for their notation during the leaders' meeting. Under the economic pillar, we have concluded many of the key performance indicators. In this case, we call it the priority economic deliverables.

"We are happy to present to the leaders this coming Sunday for adoption and notation," he told reporters after the 26th Asean Economic Community Council Meeting yesterday.

On Sept 22, Miti deputy secretary-general (trade) Mastura Ahmad Mustafa said Malaysia is confident it can achieve 15 of the 18 PED in time for the 47th Asean Summit.

The PED spearheaded by Malaysia will drive regional economic integration as part of efforts to establish the Asean Economic Community. – Bernama



Tengku Datuk Seri Zafrul (centre) and other delegates from Asean member countries pose for a group photo at the Asean Economic Community Council Special Session on the Digital Economic Framework Agreement at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday. – ***BERNAMAPIC***

Intra-regional trade can touch 40% through global value chain upgrade: Economist

KUALA LUMPUR: The bearish intra-Asean trade figure of 20% of the region's total trade can be doubled through global value chain upgrade and stronger intra-regional investment which would reshape the 10-member (soon 11) bloc's economic geography and mark a qualitative shift in regional integration, according to an eco-nomist.

Asean+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (Amro) group head and principal economist Allen Ng opined that initiatives such as the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership and the upgraded Asean-China Free Trade Agreement are vital but not sufficient.

He said these initiatives can help push intra-Asean trade to 25%.

"But with a successful domestic upgrading through global value chain linkages and stronger intra-regional investment, it could approach 40%," Ng told Bernama.

He cited strong integration into global value chains, particularly with Japan, South Korea, and China, to upgrade domestic capabilities through technology diffusion and productivity growth as among the key areas.

"Second, Asean needs to foster greater intra-regional investment, especially through the internationalisation of Asean firms, into the region in order to create new regional production and demand linkages and deepen existing ones."

He added that strengthening intra-regional investment and production networks would help Asean build resilience and reduce reliance on external demand.

On other issues, Ng noted that regional bond market development, local currency financing and sustainable finance frameworks are improving access to capital and facilitating cross-border business expansion.

COSWAY
Enriching Lives The Smarter Way

Colombia makes major strides in oil palm sector

Malaysian industry veteran says rapid growth in production there not a threat as exports are primarily targeted at American and European markets

PETALING JAYA: Colombia in South America may be hitting the headlines for the wrong reasons but it is quietly emerging as a major producer of palm oil.

An industry expert said that it is now the fourth largest producer in the world after Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand.

A dozen other Latin American countries including Peru, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Venezuela, Brazil, Guatemala, Mexico, Honduras, Panama, Argentina, Surinam are following in its footsteps, to focus on oil palm cultivation as their weather and terrain have been found to be suitable for this crop.

Industry veteran Abdul Rahim Syed Mohd, who has over 50 years experience in his planting career, visited Colombia recently to attend an international conference on the industry and met with Colombian oil palm industry chief, Nicolas Perez Marulanda, who is president of Fedepalm (National Federation of Palm Oil Growers) to discuss the progress they have made and the hurdles they have crossed.

Abdul Rahim started in the Rubber Research Institute before venturing into the then-nascent oil palm industry having worked in large plantation groups in Malaysia and Indonesia including Indonesia's largest plantation Group Sinar Mas plantations.



Abdul Rahim (centre) with Colombian Oil Palm Research Centre researchers and a Malaysian exhibitor (right).

He said the rapid growth in production in Colombia and South American countries will not be a threat to Indonesia and Malaysia as their exports are primarily targeted at the American and European markets.

He added it is remarkable that Colombia has already planted 609,000 hectares displaying very high standards of agricultural practices, adopting pure cover crop policies and field drip irrigation where necessary, of which 89% is currently in production and the balance 16% is immature.

The development cost involved a combination of self-funding, commercial borrowings supported by both public and private sector mechanisms. In Indonesia and Malaysia, it was mainly funded by the World Bank and commercial banks.

It was noted that 99% is deforestation free, greenhouse gas emission reduction exceeds international standards, numerous bio-digesters are in operation, generating biogas and reducing emissions.

One of the major attractions is the hybrid OxG palm, which has proven to be the most promising alternative for the oil palm growing sector in Latin America.

As an exceptionally good choice it is regarded as a gift of nature. Around the 1980s, bud rot was a major threat and the crop was very vulnerable but the discovery of a hybrid saved the industry.

"In my own opinion we should seriously consider the introduction of some hybrid material to be tried out in our Ganoderma-infected fields," Abdul Rahim said.

" If we succeed in these trials this would be a best bet to incorporate, besides the Ganoderma (fungal disease), we can look towards other benefits i.e high yields, shorter palms, high extraction rates, less loose fruit collection, a reduction in labour with extended harvesting rounds.

"The only setback will be the re-introduction of pollination. This will be something worth the while for consideration in the near future," he added.

Gamuda Land expands UK portfolio with RM600m London student housing project

PETALING JAYA: Gamuda Land, the property arm of Gamuda Bhd, has acquired a prime site at 14 Marshgate Lane in Stratford, London, for a new purpose-built student accommodation (PBSA) development with an estimated gross development value of RM600 million.

This marks Gamuda Land UK's first fully owned, self-developed and managed PBSA project, underscoring the company's growing capability in one of the world's most sophisticated property markets.

The Marshgate Lane acquisition advances Gamuda Land's plan to deliver up to 3,000 student beds across key UK cities in the next five years, reinforcing the company's focus on building a pipeline of recurring, income-generating assets. Together with its residential and commercial developments, this portfolio reflects Gamuda's regionalisation strategy of diversifying earnings and strengthening resilience across economic cycles.

Located in London, the 321-bed Marshgate Lane project is scheduled for completion in the 2028/29 academic year.

Strategically situated as the closest private PBSA to UCL East, it will also serve for students from the London College of Fashion, together representing a combined population of over 10,000 students.

This latest addition brings Gamuda Land's UK PBSA portfolio to 1,232 beds across three projects in just 18 months, with completion in 2026 to 2028.

"PBSA is a counter-cyclical asset class underpinned by strong and consistent student demand, which helps balance our residential and commercial portfolios. The UK has one of the world's largest international student populations with over 680,000 enrolments, yet purpose-built accommodation currently accounts for less than 30% of supply. This structural undersupply, coupled with universities' ongoing global appeal, gives us confidence in long-term earnings visibility," said Gamuda Land CEO Chu Wai Lune.

Gamuda Land's UK pipeline now stands at about £1.5 billion (RM8.4 billion), anchored by the landmark £1.2 billion prime office redevelopment of 75 London Wall in partnership with Castleforge. The project is on track to sign its main contract with Multiplex this quarter, with leasing discussions progressing steadily with prospective tenants.

"75 London Wall demonstrates our ability to strategically commit to prime opportunities. Savills data shows Central London leasing rebounded strongly in early 2025, led by demand for Grade A space. That gives us confidence in the resilience of the prime office market.

"Together with our PBSA assets, these projects underline the financial resilience and discipline of Gamuda, providing us with a strong pipeline that supports medium- to long-term growth visibility," said Chu.

The PBSA expansion complements Gamuda Land's West Hampstead Central build-to-sell residential project, creating a balanced UK portfolio across recurring income, capital gains and institutional-grade commercial assets.

Proton enhances after-sales capabilities in Sabah as sales grow

PETALING JAYA: Despite the long holiday period in September, the all-new Proton X50 continued its strong sales momentum, leading Malaysia's SUV segment with 2,994 units sold.

To support this rising demand, Proton is enhancing its after-sales capabilities in Sabah, underscoring the company's commitment to its growing customer base in East Malaysia.

The regional parts centre in Kota Kinabalu, the established logistics backbone for Proton in East Malaysia, is playing a crucial role in ensuring urgent service parts can reach dealers in as fast as one day, while routine stock replenishment is fulfilled within two days.

"Sabah remains one of Proton's most important growth markets in East Malaysia. Our Kota Kinabalu parts hub has the capability to fulfil up to 6,000 dealer orders monthly, helping to ensure fast and dependable service for our customers," said Proton Edar deputy CEO Zhang Qiang.

East Malaysia contributed 20.6% of Proton's nationwide sales in 2025, underscoring the region's importance to overall performance. Year-to-date growth in the region continues to be driven by the Saga (15,438 units), Persona (2,496 units), and X50 (1,649 units).

To sustain this momentum, Proton continues to implement the Proton Operational Excellence Programme across Sabah.

"Our goal is to give every Proton owner confidence that support is always accessible and efficient. Reaffirming the strength of our parts and service network reflects our commitment to delivering excellent customer experiences as our presence continues to grow in East Malaysia," Zhang said.

Hengyuan Refining raises RM234m from rights issue

PETALING JAYA: Hengyuan Refining Co Bhd announced yesterday that valid acceptances and excess applications for a total of 368,639,833 rights shares were received as at the close of its rights issue on Oct 17.

This represents 122.88% of the total number of rights shares available under the rights issue. At an issue price per rights share of 78 sen, the company has raised gross proceeds of RM234 million.

Chief financial officer Yeo Bee Hwan said: "We are very pleased with the outcome of the rights issue and appreciate the support we have received from existing shareholders, as well as new investors who have participated in the rights issue. This result is a testament to their continued trust in Hengyuan's fundamentals and the confidence they have in our future prospects.

"With the successful completion of the rights issue, we have unlocked additional working capital, strengthened our equity base, and improved our financial position. We will continue working diligently to deliver value to all our shareholders."

Hengyuan Refining's major shareholder, Malaysia Hengyuan International Ltd (MHIL), which holds 51.02% of the company's issued shares, undertook to subscribe for its full entitlement and excess rights shares. This enabled Hengyuan Refining to meet its minimum fundraising target of RM155 million.

Hengyuan Refining expects the rights shares and warrants to be listed and quoted on the Main Market of Bursa Securities on Oct 30.

Hengyuan Refining manages and operates a refinery in Port Dickson, Negeri Sembilan, with a production capacity of up to 156,000 barrels per day. The refinery is involved in the refining and manufacturing of petroleum products and has been in operation since 1963.

The majority shareholder of Hengyuan Refining is MHIL, which is fully owned by Heng Yuan Holdings Ltd, which in turn is a wholly owned subsidiary of Shandong Hengyuan Petrochemical Co Ltd.

Nuclear power – the road to net zero?

Debate resurfaces in Malaysia as country plans to explore option amid growing energy demand and transition to low-carbon future

PETALING JAYA: The global momentum for nuclear energy is gaining pace as countries race to meet their net-zero targets and secure energy independence through low-carbon solutions – and Asean nations, including Malaysia, are no exception.

In Malaysia, debate over whether to include nuclear power in the national energy mix has resurfaced as the government seeks to balance its 2050 net-zero ambition with the country's growing energy demands.

Malaysia's push to become a regional data centre hub is expected to significantly increase electricity consumption.

According to energy think tank Ember, power demand from data centres is projected to surge sevenfold – from 8.5 terawatt hours (TWh) in 2024 to 68 TWh in 2030 – accounting for about 30% of total national demand.

The key question is how Malaysia will meet these rising energy needs.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, who also heads the Energy Transition and Water Transformation Ministry (Petra) recently said the government plans to explore nuclear energy for power generation under the 13th Malaysia Plan as part of its clean energy strategy.

The initiative will be coordinated by the Nuclear Energy Programme Implementing Organisation (Nepio) under MyPower Corporation, based on guidelines from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Proponents argue that nuclear energy provides a reliable, large-scale, low-carbon power source essential for supporting Malaysia's economic growth and achieving its 2050 net-zero emissions goal.

At the United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from Nov 30 to Dec 12, 2023, more than 20 countries pledged to triple global nuclear capacity by 2050, highlighting its rising significance in the global energy transition.

However, as Malaysia awaits detailed implementation guidelines, debate continues to intensify between supporters – who view nuclear power as vital for decarbonisation – and critics who cite concerns over waste management, safety, and cost.

The nuclear debate gained new traction during the World Atomic Week 2025, held on Sept 25–28 in Moscow.

The event, organised by Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corporation, marked the 80th anniversary of Russia's nuclear industry and gathered industry leaders, policymakers, scientists, and media from more than 100 countries under the theme "Everything Starts with an Atom."

World Nuclear Association (WNA) director-general Dr Sama Bilbao y Leon said nuclear energy could reduce electricity costs by as much as 75% once integrated into national grids.

While acknowledging the high upfront investment, she stressed that the long-term economic and social benefits far outweigh initial costs.

"Although nuclear power plants require large capital, they provide 24/7, carbon-free, and highly reliable electricity and heat for 60, 80, or even 100 years," she told the international press on the sidelines of the event.

She urged governments to consider the full economic picture rather than focusing only on construction costs.

"When assessing nuclear economics, we must account for decades of clean energy generation, job creation, and socio-economic growth," she said.

Citing Finland's experience – where electricity prices dropped by 75% after introducing nuclear energy – she said countries like Malaysia should evaluate not just the investment, but the long-term national benefits.

(The Olkiluoto plant, which began commercial operation in 2023, now provides about one-third of Finland's electricity.)

IAEA director-general Rafael Grossi added that nuclear power had shed the "unjustified reluctance and doubts" of past decades, and is now recognised as a safe, reliable energy source.

"There will be no risks in terms of proliferation or safety, and it will facilitate access for developing countries," he said.

Several Asean nations are already moving ahead. The Philippines aims to develop up to 4,800MW of nuclear power by 2050, Vietnam has reintroduced nuclear into its power plan, and Indonesia is exploring small modular and floating reactors by 2030. Thailand and Myanmar have signed cooperation agreements with Russia and Rosatom to study SMRs.

Asean Centre for Energy executive director Datuk Razib Dawood said the region must urgently strengthen clean energy capacity – including nuclear – to meet the rising power demand from data centres and artificial intelligence (AI) infrastructure.

"The demand from AI, cloud computing, and data centres is immense, not only for processing but for cooling systems that run 24/7. We cannot ignore this when planning our future energy mix," he told Bernama.

Razib, the former Energy Commission (ST) CEO, said renewable energy remains central to Asean's transition but is intermittent. Thus, countries need other reliable, low-carbon options such as nuclear.

"Tech giants like Google and Amazon already recognise nuclear as a clean, stable energy source. To attract digital investments and maintain competitiveness, Asean nations must ensure secure and predictable power," he said.

Concerns over nuclear waste and radiation safety remain major public hurdles – often linked to memories of the 2011 Fukushima Daiichi disaster in Japan.

On March 11, 2011, a major nuclear accident took place at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in Ôkuma, Fukushima, Japan, triggered by the Tôhoku earthquake and tsunami, which caused a complete failure of the electrical grid and severely damaged nearly all of the plant's backup power systems.

WNA's Bilbao said the nuclear industry has effectively managed waste using a closed-cycle system.

"No other energy source can claim that every gramme of waste produced globally in the past 80 years is properly managed – either stored, or safely isolated from the environment," she said.

She advised newcomer countries like Malaysia to adopt clear waste management strategies to strengthen public confidence.

Razib echoed the need for transparency and strong regulation before Malaysia proceeds.

Vitaliy Pakermanov, acting director SMR Project Office of Rosatom's Mechanical Engineering Division, said the company has a comprehensive waste management master plan to support reactors with service lives of 40 to 60 years.

"Safety is our priority, and Rosatom provides support and management of NPP during the whole lifecycle including decommissioning and radioactive waste management," he said.

To strengthen public understanding and confidence, Malaysia Programme Office for Power Electricity Reform (MyPOWER) Corporation – which serves as Malaysia's Nepio – has outlined a phased communication strategy.

Its CEO Asdirhyme Abdul Rasib said the short-term plan, spanning the next 12 months, will focus on public engagement and energy literacy campaigns highlighting the everyday applications of technology.

"We want to show that nuclear technology and application is already part of our daily lives – through medical radiation such as X-rays, materials testing, and research, which are safe, familiar applications that help the public relate better to nuclear science," he told Bernama at the Asean Business and Energy Ministers Meeting 2025 forum at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre recently.

The programmes will be carried out under the Malaysia Energy Literacy Programme in collaboration with PETRA and the Energy Commission, targeting schools, universities and community groups.

Building on this foundation, the next stage – a 10-year strategic communication plan, will focus on long-term stakeholders' engagement, particularly in areas that could be identified as potential nuclear development sites in the future.

Asdirhyme said the government has demonstrated strong commitment by allocating about RM28.6 million in Budget 2026 to advance Malaysia's nuclear readiness, in line with the need to decarbonise the electricity sector while meeting growing energy demand.

He said for the purpose, six national task forces comprising multiple ministries and agencies – led by Petra and the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation – have also been established to support nuclear development efforts, including technical and regulatory oversight.

He said MyPOWER is also conducting a detailed assessment on Malaysia's legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure full compliance international legal requirements under the IAEA guideline.

Asean Parliamentarians for Human Rights co-chairperson Charles Santiago urged the government to disclose proposed reactor and waste disposal sites, saying transparency is key to public trust.

He also called for the release of a full cost-benefit analysis, including decommissioning and long-term waste management costs.

Sahabat Alam Malaysia president Meenakshi Raman raised similar concerns, questioning where nuclear waste would be stored given its long-lasting radioactivity.

"Radioactive materials such as uranium and thorium can remain hazardous for thousands of years. How will we ensure safety for future generations?" she asked.

Recalling the 1982 Bukit Merah radioactive pollution incident in Perak, once described as Asia's worst radioactive contamination case, she said Malaysia must not repeat past mistakes.



theSun Malaysian Paper ipaper
READ OUR ipaper HERE
/thesun
SCAN ME

Trump says all trade talks with Canada 'terminated'

Abrupt halt comes after the US president accused Ottawa of misusing Reagan's remarks in a campaign on tariffs

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said Thursday he was ending trade talks with Canada over an anti-tariff advertising campaign, a sudden about-face soon after a cordial White House meeting with Prime Minister Mark Carney.

On his Truth Social network, Trump vented fury at what he called a "fake" ad that he said misquoted former president Ronald Reagan discussing tariff policy.

Trump said the campaign – produced by the Canadian province of Ontario to be aired on US television channels – was designed to "interfere with the decision of the US Supreme Court", which is due to rule on his sweeping global tariffs.

"Based on their egregious behaviour, ALL TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH CANADA ARE HEREBY TERMINATED," Trump posted.

There was no immediate comment from officials in Canada, where Carney said in a budget speech on Wednesday that Washington's "fundamentally changed" trade policy required a revamp of Ottawa's economic strategy.

Trump said "the Ronald Reagan Foundation has just announced that Canada has fraudulently used an advertisement, which is FAKE, featuring Ronald Reagan speaking negatively about tariffs."

The foundation wrote on X that the Ontario government had used "selective audio and video" from a radio address on trade that Reagan had delivered in 1987.

It said the ad "misrepresents" what the former Republican president said, adding that it was "reviewing its legal options."

The ad used quotes from Reagan's speech, in which he warned against some of the ramifications that high tariffs on foreign imports could have on the US economy.

It cited Reagan as saying that "high tariffs inevitably lead to retaliation by foreign countries and the triggering of fierce trade wars," a quote that matches a transcript of his speech on the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library's website.

The latest twist in relations between the US and Canada came just over two weeks after Carney visited Trump at the White House to seek a relaxation of stiff US tariffs.

At that meeting, Trump described Carney as a "world-class leader" and said the Canadian would "walk away very happy" from their discussion.

Trump's global sectoral tariffs – particularly on steel, aluminium, and autos – have hit Canada hard, forcing job losses and squeezing businesses.

For now, the US and Canada continue to adhere to an existing North American trade deal called the USMCA, which ensures that roughly 85% of cross-border trade in both directions remains tariff-free.

In his speech on Wednesday, ahead of the unveiling of the 2025 federal budget next month, Carney said that the US has raised "its tariffs to levels last seen during the Great Depression."

"The scale and speed of these developments are not a smooth transition, they're a rupture. They mean our economic strategy needs to change dramatically," Carney added, saying the process "will take some sacrifices and some time."

Both Trump and the Canadian prime minister are due to attend gatherings in the coming days – the regional summit of Southeast Asian nations in Malaysia and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Forum in South Korea.

Earlier this week, Carney had said Ottawa was in "intensive negotiations" with Washington for a trade deal.

Canada is a major supplier of steel and aluminum for US businesses, and Carney had expressed optimism about the prospects of a breakthrough in those sectors.

Carney has also said his government is focused on preserving the USMCA, which was signed during Trump's first term and is scheduled for review in 2026.

While most cross-border food trade has remained tariff-free, some US tariffs and Canadian countermeasures have forced some suppliers to raise prices.

Data released Tuesday showed Canada's annual inflation rate rising to 2.4% in September – slightly above analyst expectations, with rising grocery prices partly driving the inflation bump.

Canadian grocery stores have historically relied heavily on US imports. – AFP

China, US 'can find ways to resolve concerns' as negotiators set to meet

BEIJING: Beijing and Washington "can totally find ways to resolve each other's concerns", China's commerce minister said yesterday, as officials from both sides were set to meet in Malaysia for trade talks.

The world's two biggest economies have spent a large part of this year locked in a tit-for-tat trade row, though they appear to be seeking to avoid further escalation.

Chinese Vice-Premier He Lifeng is leading a delegation to meet US counterparts in Malaysia from Oct 24-27, Beijing said Thursday, the latest of several such rounds of negotiations.

Commerce minister Wang Wentao said yesterday that the previous meetings had shown "China and the US can totally find ways to resolve each other's concerns".

The two can "find correct ways to coexist, and promote the healthy, stable and sustainable development of China-US economic ties through mutual respect and equal consultation", he told a news conference marking the end of a key political meeting in Beijing.

The Malaysia talks come after a "candid, in-depth and constructive" weekend call between He and US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, who will attend the meeting.

Hopes that ties might stabilise were given a further boost when the White House announced US President Donald Trump will meet Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping in South Korea next Thursday, having previously threatened to cancel.

The preceding talks in Malaysia will cover "important issues in the economic and trade relationship between China and the US", Beijing said Thursday.

Trade tensions between the two have been on a rollercoaster ride since Trump's return to the White House, with both sides slapping escalating tariffs on each other.

Tit-for-tat duties reached triple digits on both sides at one point this year, snarling supply chains.

A key meeting in May between their negotiators in Geneva resulted in a 90-day suspension of the highest tariffs.

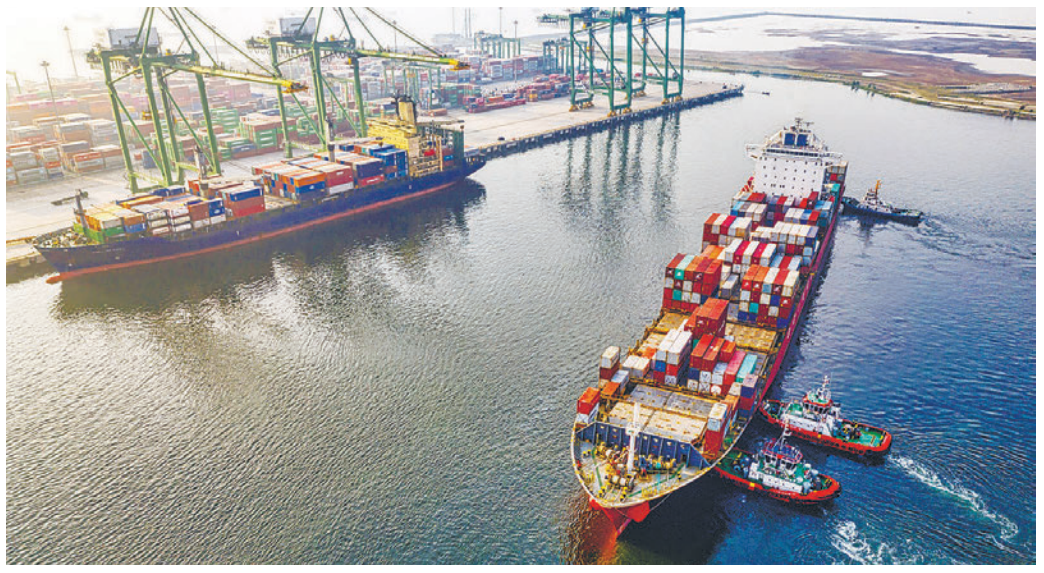
Subsequent talks in London, Stockholm and Madrid worked towards establishing a more permanent deal, among other agreements, but the truce remains shaky.

The pause on steeper duties is in place until Nov 10 after being extended again in August.

However, disagreements have flared again, with Beijing this month announcing sweeping controls on the critical rare earths industry – prompting Trump to threaten 100% tariffs on imports from China in retaliation.

The countries also began applying arrival fees against each other's ships, sparked by a US "Section 301" investigation that found China's dominance in the maritime sector was unreasonable.

But Trump said on Wednesday he hopes to reach a "deal on everything" with Xi. – AFP



Stronger supply chain links within Asia may help economies reduce reliance on Western markets. - ***UNSPLASH PIX***

IMF urges Asia to cut trade barriers to beat US tariffs

WASHINGTON: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) yesterday urged Asia to lower non-tariff barriers and integrate regional trade to reduce its vulnerability to US tariffs and global financial shocks.

Trade has been central to Asia's economic growth with China serving as the supply chain hub for goods production across the globe, which makes it vulnerable to the hit from US-China trade tensions and President Donald Trump's tariffs, the IMF said in a regional economic outlook report for Asia.

Trade friction with the US and an investment boom in artificial intelligence have led to rising intra-regional trade in Asia, the report said.

Promoting further regional trade integration, including by removing trade barriers, could help Asian countries diversify export markets, reduce costs and offset some of the headwinds from the tariff shocks, it said.

"If Asia integrates more within the region, that itself provides you a buffer against external shocks," Krishna Srinivasan, director of the IMF's Asia and Pacific Department, told Reuters.

Asia is highly integrated in intermediate goods trade, with about 60% of total exports made within the region, Srinivasan said. By contrast, only 30% of final goods exports by Asian countries are made within the region – a sign of the region's reliance on US and European markets, he added.

The report said Asia can benefit from pursuing broader-based trade agreements, such as one seen in the European Union, as its current focus on bilateral agreements create overlapping rules and inconsistent standards.

Lowering non-tariff barriers, which increased during the Covid-19 pandemic and remain pervasive in Asia, could deliver sizable benefits, it said.

In fact, some countries are voluntarily reducing non-tariff barriers as part of trade negotiations with the US, which is a "very positive" trend, Srinivasan said.

With greater regional trade integration, Asia could see GDP rise by as much as 1.4% over the medium term, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations economies by as much as 4%, Srinivasan said.

"There is a silver lining in that some countries, which had to liberalise anyway, are now liberalising," he said.

The IMF expects Asia's economy to expand 4.5% in 2025, slowing from 4.6% last year but up 0.6 percentage point from its estimate in April, due to strong exports driven in part by front-loading of shipments ahead of higher US tariffs.

It expects growth to slow to 4.1% in 2026 due to the impact of trade tensions, weak demand in China and soft private consumption in emerging economies.

"While trade policy uncertainty has declined somewhat compared to April, it remains high and could weigh on investment and sentiment more than expected," the IMF said in the report. – Reuters

TOP SHOTS OF THE WEEK



GLOMAC GLOWS ... Glomac Bhd, one of Malaysia's most established and award-winning property developers, announced another year of reliable performance and shareholder rewards at its 41st annual general meeting on Thursday where shareholders approved a single-tier final dividend of 1.25 sen per ordinary share for the financial year ended April 30, 2025. From left: Independent non-executive directors Datuk Setia Haris Kasim and Mohd Razlan Mohamed, group managing director/CEO Datuk Seri Fateh Iskandar Mohamed Mansor, group non-executive chairman Tan Sri Mohamed Mansor Fateh Din, and independent non-executive directors Datuk Mohd Adzahar Abdul Wahid and Shan Choo.



UNDERWRITING PACT ... Polymer Link Holdings Bhd, a regional and international company specialising in manufacturing plastic powder and colour masterbatch for rotational moulding applications, has signed an underwriting agreement with Hong Leong Investment Bank Bhd in preparation for its upcoming listing on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities. At the signing of the agreement are Polymer Link executive vice-chairman/president and group CEO Koh Song Heng (left) and Hong Leong Investment Bank Bhd group managing director and CEO Lee Jim Leng.



BUDGET ROUNDTABLE ... Hong Leong Bank on Wednesday hosted a roundtable entitled 'Decoding Budget 2026: What It Means for Malaysia's Growth' which gathered policymakers, industry leaders and economic experts to discuss the implications on Malaysia's macroeconomic outlook and business landscape. From left: Hong Leong Islamic Bank CEO Dafinah Ahmed Hilmi, PwC Malaysia tax partner Ang Wei Liang, Hong Leong Bank economist, fixed income and economic research Choong Ying Pheng, Small and Medium Enterprises Association of Malaysia president Datuk William Ng and Taylor's University Adjunct Professor Dr Ong Kian Ming.



STUNNING DEBUT ... THMY Holdings Bhd, an automated test solutions provider for electrical and electronic products, made its debut on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities on Thursday. Its share price opened at 80 sen, representing a158.1% premium over the IPO of 31 sen. The stock closed at the day's peak of 91 sen, 60 sen or 193.5% above the IPO price. From left: Affin Hwang Investment Bank Bhd chairman and independent non-executive director Hasli Hashim; THMY independent non-executive director Aw Ee Leng, executive director and chief operating officer Chew Yap Meng, executive director and COO Ooi Can Nix, independent non-executive chairman Daruk Dr Mohd Sofi Osman, independent non-executive directors Datuk Cheok Lay Leng and Chua Hooi Luan; and Affin Hwang Investment Bank CEO Hanif Ghulam Mohammed.



BANKING ON VIETNAM ... Hong Leong Bank Bhd, the first Malaysian lender to operate in Vietnam, has entered into a strategic partnership with So Ban Hang, Vietnam's leading business management app. The collaboration is driven by a shared vision to empower Vietnam's young entrepreneurs and MSMEs, helping them not just to run their businesses, but to build lasting wealth. From left: Hong Leong Bank chief digital commercialisation officer Fred Lim; Hong Leong Bank Vietnam head of marketing and digital banking Barry Do, and general director Duong Duc Hung; and So Ban Hang CEO Bui Hai Nam, chief product officer Bui Hai Long, and chief marketing officer Do Duy Hai.



DIGITAL LEAP ... Measat Global Bhd, Beijing Guodian High-Tech Technology Co Ltd (Guodian Gaoke) and China StarWin Science and Technology Co Ltd have formalised a tripartite strategic alliance to power Sarawak's digital ambitions by delivering Tianqi Low Earth Orbit satellite-based Internet of Things services. The signing of the tripartite agreement took place at International Digital Economy Conference Sarawak 2025 in Kuching on Wednesday, witnessed by Sarawak Premier Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Abang Abdul Rahman Zohari Abang Openg. From left: Guodian Gaoke COO Guo Zhongjia, Measat COO Yau Chyong Lim and StarWin chairman James Li.



FINISHING TOUCHES ... A worker makes preparations for the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



ONLINE VIGILANCE ... Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil posing with participants during the Internet Safety Campaign event at Kolej Tingkatan Enam Kota Kinabalu in Sabah. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



COMBAT CANINES ... Armed Forces 'Wolf Wing' Unit dogs and their handlers conducting a demonstration on tactical takedown skills during a Madani Rakyat event at Politeknik Merlimau in Malacca. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



AL FRESCO FEAST ... Perak restaurant owner Nasirudin Mohd and his wife showing dishes served at their
at tables placed in a stream amid natural surroundings. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



RELAXED REPTILES ... A toddler getting a closer view of crocodiles at the A'Famosa Safari Wonderland in Malacca. – ***AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN***



PLEASANT PRIMATES ... A visitor interacting with friendly monkeys at Bukit Melawati in Kuala Selangor. – ***ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN***



FLOWER BOUNTY ... A woman picks marigolds, used for garlands and prayers, to sell at a market for the Tihar festival in Kathmandu, Nepal. – ***REUTERSPIC***



HUNGRY HUDDLE ... Palestinians gather to receive food from a charity kitchen at the Nuseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip. – ***AFPPIC***



Warung Sungai Berakir in Kampung Tapah, a unique eatery that allows customers to enjoy meals while seated



SOLEMN SALUTE ... Police personnel pay tribute to fallen officers during an event held to mark 'Police Commemoration Day' in Hyderabad, India. – ***AFPPIC***



FARM FESTIVAL ... A girl hugs one of the displays during the 'Hello, pumpkin' event in Kyiv, Ukraine. – ***AFPPIC***



ANGRY ACTION ... A university student kicks a police barricade during a protest criticising government policies on the first anniversary of President Prabowo's administration in Jakarta, Indonesia. – ***REUTERSPIC***

Eat, pray, spike: Health hangover of Deepavali

POTTU ON POINT
BY HASHINI KAVISHTRI



DEEPAVALI may be over but the spirit – and the snacks – are still hanging around like uninvited guests who refuse to leave.

The lights are packed away but my kitchen still looks like Little India went through a sugar rush.

There's *murukku* in Milo tins, *gulab jamun* bobbing in syrup like they are doing water aerobics and the fridge smells faintly of ghee and nostalgia.

Every year, I give myself the same motivational talk: "This time I'll be disciplined. Just one sweet, one handful of *murukku*, that's it."

Two days later, I'm sprawled on the sofa in a sugar coma, justifying another *laddu* with the logic that "Deepavali comes only once a year, ma".

But let's be real – Deepavali food is not just food; it's heritage, memory and pure emotion rolled into one.

To refuse a sweet is to refuse love. Try telling an Indian aunty, "No thanks, I'm cutting sugar", and watch her face fall like you just insulted her entire bloodline.

She will immediately push another tray at you: "Just take one-la, for taste." You take one, she piles five. That is how family love works – it is measured in carbohydrates.

The Consumers' Association of Penang tried to issue a polite warning this year, reminding Hindus to go easy on the sweets and oily snacks.

Bless their optimism. You can't exactly tell my mother to reduce ghee in her *mysore pak* – that's like telling the Pope to skip Sunday Mass.

But behind the laughter, there's truth. Malaysia's health numbers are quietly terrifying. We are among the region's top in diabetes and heart disease rates.

According to the Health Ministry, one in five Malaysians has diabetes – and many don't even know it yet.

The irony is that while we talk about lighting lamps to banish darkness, we are ignoring the slow burn of sugar and oil that dims us from within.

Still, food in our culture isn't just indulgence; it's identity. For many Indian Malaysians, Deepavali isn't just a festival; it is survival in edible form.

Our ancestors came to this land with little more than recipes and resilience. When we fill the table with curry, snacks and sweets, it's not gluttony; it's gratitude. It's saying, "We made it".

But somewhere between ancestral devotion and modern abundance, we have gone from celebrating to overcompensating.

We no longer just make a few sweets; we cater like we are feeding the entire neighbourhood. Every visit turns into a marathon of "Eat, eat!" while the guests secretly loosen their belts and pray for mercy.

We Malaysians also have this strange national affection for sugar. We sweeten everything – tea, coffee, even our *sambal* sometimes.

Teh tarik kurang manis still tastes like a dessert. Sugar has become our love language. Someone sad? "Drink Milo." Someone visiting? "Have *kuih*." Someone heartbroken? "Never mind, come eat."

The problem is, our bodies are waving white flags. My neighbour's son, who's only 25, was told his cholesterol is "very mature". My cousin says her doctor told her to treat *murukku* like cigarettes – "not daily, maybe occasionally". She replied, "Doctor, Deepavali is once a year!" and proudly left with two tins.

It's not just what we eat; it's how we cook. By the third day, even the oil in the *kuali* looks exhausted. We reuse it, reheat it and wonder why everything starts to taste like yesterday's sins.

Maybe we don't need to give up our traditions, just lighten the load a little. Smaller portions. Healthier versions. Try air-fried *murukku* (I can hear the aunties gasping already), cut back the sugar in the *halwa* and don't recycle oil till it achieves consciousness.

We could also rethink how we celebrate. Every year, the women in the family end up running a full catering operation, juggling the pressure to please everyone and the guilt of resting.



Deepavali food is not just food; it's heritage, memory and pure emotion rolled into one. – **BERNAMAPIC**

Maybe it's time we made Deepavali preparation a shared joy – potluck style, everyone brings a dish. Less exhaustion, more laughter and fewer passive-aggressive comments about whose *laddu* turned out better.

Deepavali, after all, is about light – about clarity after darkness. Maybe that clarity includes being honest about how we treat our bodies. Because what is the point of celebrating victory over evil if we end up defeated by triglycerides?

Festivals should leave us glowing, not groaning. Let the brightness come from joy, not from the reflection of ghee on our skin.

As for me, I'm officially on a "detox". Translation: less sugar in my coffee and no *murukku* before noon. Let's see how long that lasts. Because somewhere in the fridge, one last piece of *jelebi* is still winking at me – sticky, unapologetic and very hard to resist.

Maybe next year, I'll have more willpower. Or maybe I'll just have smaller *murukku* tins.

Either way, the *pottu* will still be on point, just hopefully with less oil around it.

Hashini Kavishtri Kannan is the assistant news editor at theSun. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

COMMENT by Prof Ng Kwan Hoong

Bridging friendships over troubled waters

AFTER a heavy downpour one afternoon, I found myself walking across a narrow bridge over Sungai Pantai at Universiti Malaya.

The water below churned with mud and broken branches, and every now and then, something unexpected floated by – a shoe, a leaf, a crushed plastic bottle – each swept along by the same relentless current.

I stopped for a moment to watch. The river was in a hurry to go somewhere. And then, as if on cue, the familiar tune of Simon and Garfunkel's 1970 hit *Bridge Over Troubled Water* surfaced quietly in my mind.

"When you're weary, feeling small,
When tears are in your eyes, I will dry them all;
I'm on your side when times get rough,
Like a bridge over troubled water, I will lay me down."

Standing there, the bridge beneath my feet seemed to transform. It was no longer just steel and concrete; it became something living – a metaphor for what we all need when life's waters rise: something or someone strong enough to hold us steady and kind enough to let us cross.

When life gets rough

There are moments when the weight of the world presses heavily on our shoulders. Plans fail, health falters, dreams lose their shine or loneliness creeps in quietly at the edges. These are our troubled waters. Even the most resilient among us can feel unsure of where to step next.

As Cicero, the Roman orator, statesman and philosopher, once wrote: "Friendship improves happiness and abates misery, by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief."

In those fragile moments, the true meaning of friendship becomes clear. A real friend doesn't just walk with us when the path is easy and the sky is blue; they stay when the wind howls. They remind us that we are not alone, that even in the storm, there is a bridge beneath our trembling feet.

We often think friendship is about grand gestures – celebrations, gifts and shared adventures. But most of the time, it reveals itself in quiet, unassuming ways. A message that simply says, "Are you okay?", a voice on the phone that stays a little longer than usual or a presence that needs no words.

Think back to a time when you were overwhelmed by grief, illness or the loss of someone dear. Perhaps there was a friend who didn't try to fix anything, who simply sat beside you – in silence but with warmth. That was your bridge.

> *"Friendship improves happiness and abates misery, by the doubling of our joy and the dividing of our grief. – Cicero"*

Their kindness did not remove the flood but it steadied your steps so you could move forward again. Such presence is a rare and gentle grace.

Lending an ear

Yet, friendship is never a one-way crossing. Just as we need bridges, we are called to become one for others. Sometimes, that means stepping into another's pain, even when it makes us uncomfortable. Other times, it is about holding space for someone else's silence, trusting that our stillness is enough.

George Eliot captured it beautifully: "Oh, the comfort, the inexpressible comfort of feeling safe with a person… of pouring them all out – just as they are." That is the gift of true friendship – the bridge of trust, presence and love that holds firm even when everything else feels uncertain.

A bridge does not remove the troubled waters below it; it simply allows safe passage above them. It remains unmoving, even when the current rages. To be a bridge for another is to lay aside our comfort for their need, to lend our steadiness when theirs is shaken. It connects hearts that might otherwise drift apart and restores faith when hope feels distant.

We step onto a bridge because we trust it will hold. True friendship rests on that same trust – the quiet assurance that someone will not let us fall. And that, in itself, is a blessing from God.

"If you need a friend,
I'm sailing right behind.
Like a bridge over troubled water,
I will ease your mind."

The song endures across generations because it speaks to something deeply human – the longing to know that when we falter, someone will help carry us. Friendship is about that presence, that willingness to stay when staying is hard.

So when the waters rise and the current feels too strong, remember the people who once became bridges for you. And when you see someone struggling to cross their own river, be that bridge for them.

Because in the end, it is the bridges we build for one another that make life's journey not only bearable but also profoundly beautiful.

"Like a bridge over troubled water,
I will lay me down."

Ng Kwan Hoong is an emeritus professor of Biomedical Imaging at the Faculty of Medicine, Universiti Malaya. A 2020 Merdeka Award recipient, he is a medical physicist by training. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com

SCAN ME

theSun LYFE

SATURDAY | OCT 25, 2025

Editorial
T: 03-7784 6688
F: 03-7785 2625
E: *lifestyle@thesundaily.com*

Advertising
T: 03-7784 8888
E: *advertise@thesundaily.com*

Will-ing to Speak

Sam Wills on his latest album ***– P25***



– *PIC FROM INSTAGRAM @SAMWILLSMUSIC*

WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY
Technology and social media

TUESDAY
Family and parenting

WEDNESDAY
Fashion and beauty

THURSDAY
Home and living

FRIDAY
Travel and leisure

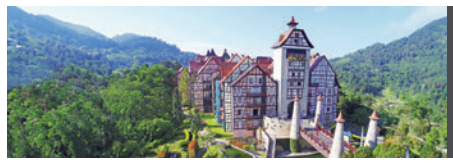
SATURDAY
Food and beverage

INSIDE

p20 M'sian launches world's first halal masala tea in can

p24 Wakin Chau evokes nostalgia in KL concert

p26 Tame Impala releases fifth album Deadbeat



TASTY RECIPE

Crispy Pan-fried Fish with Stinky Beans

THIS bold and aromatic dish celebrates a truly Malaysian flavour trio – stinky beans, fiery chillies and fragrant onions. Paired with crispy pan-fried fish and a savoury, well-balanced seasoning, it delivers a punchy, deliciously local taste in every bite. This Malaysian-style recipe is sure to impress with its vibrant flavours and irresistible aroma.

Ingredients
Main:
3 Gulama fish (or any firm white fish)
A handful of stinky beans (*petai*)
5 garlic cloves, minced
5 bird's eye chillies, chopped
1 onion, thinly sliced

Marinate:
Salt
Turmeric powder

Seasoning:
A splash of water
½ tsp salt
A pinch of Chek Hup Diamond Rock Sugar
2 tsp cooking oil

Instructions
1. Prepare the fish
Clean and pat dry the fish. Make a few slits along the thicker parts to ensure even cooking. Rub salt generously on both sides and inside the cavity, then dust with turmeric powder. Let it marinate while prepping other ingredients.
2. Prep the aromatics
Mince the garlic, chop the chillies and slice the onion thinly.
3. Fry the fish
Heat a pot with enough oil for shallow frying. Fry the fish until crispy and golden on one side, then gently flip and fry the other side. Remove and set aside.
4. Stir fried seasoning
Pour out most of the oil, leaving a bit in the pot. Saute the garlic until fragrant, then add a bit more oil along with the chillies and onions. Stir-fry until softened and aromatic. Add in stinky beans, followed by a splash of water, salt and a pinch of Chek Hup Diamond Rock Sugar to round out the flavours. Cook until everything is well combined and smells irresistible.
5. Finish and serve
Spoon the fragrant stir-fried topping over the crispy fish and serve immediately with steamed rice.

Tip
Do not be shy with the salt when marinating the fish – it is key to bringing out deep flavour. And when stir-frying the seasoning, a little extra oil helps develop that rich, mouthwatering aroma that ties the whole dish together.





The launch of the world's first *halal* masala tea in a can at MMU, Cyberjaya.

From campus to clouds

MMU alumnus launches world's first *halal* masala tea in can

A story brewed in the lecture halls of Multimedia University (MMU) has now taken flight. Gisnervern Arikrishnan, MMU alumnus and creator of the viral "10,000 Cans to Sell" challenge, has launched the world's first *halal* sterilised masala tea in a can – a product redefining Malaysia's beverage innovation and uniting Malaysians through culture, health and entrepreneurship.

The launch, titled "An Alumni's Dream", was held at MMU's Entrepreneur Development Centre, drawing hundreds of guests, influencers and business leaders.

What began as a small campus kiosk has now become a brand ready to travel the world. After two years of research and development, Gisnervern's company Leafhaus is now in talks with AirAsia for a potential collaboration to bring Malaysian flavours to international skies.

Inspired by Tan Sri Tony Fernandes' RM1 dream, Gisnervern shared: "Tony proved that a Malaysian dream can fly. I wanted to show that a Malaysian taste can travel just as far."

The collaboration aims to feature Leafhaus masala tea and turmeric milk on select AirAsia flights and Santan outlets, symbolising freedom, accessibility and innovation. The alumnus also expressed his interest to join AirAsia, and is looking forward to doing it right.

The journey did not stop with tea. Motivated by Datuk Rosyam Nor's drive, discipline and fearless entrepreneurship, Gisnervern developed Turmeric Milk in a Can, another innovation designed to promote wellness through Malaysia's age-old remedies.



Leafhaus masala tea and turmeric milk.

"Rosyam told the benefits of turmeric milk in one of his podcasts with Wonda. This isn't just a drink – it's a movement towards natural healing through modern packaging."

To bring these flavours closer to the people, Leafhaus is now exploring a collaboration with banana leaf restaurant chain BananaBro.

Together, the brands aim to make authentic, *halal*-certified heritage drinks available at every BananaBro outlet nationwide, pairing Malaysia's beloved comfort food with Malaysia's new beverage innovation.

"BananaBro represents the evolution of Malaysian dining – youthful, modern and rooted in culture. It's the platform for Leafhaus to connect with every Malaysian, every table, every meal," said Gisnervern.

Launched in conjunction with Deepavali, this milestone represents not just business success but personal transformation. Once weighing 138kg, Gisnervern turned health struggles into strength – crafting a product low in sugar, rich in antioxidants and built around the principle that "health is the true wealth".

"My mission now is clear – to sell 10,000 cartons by year-end, not just for profit, but to inspire every young Malaysian to dream big, start small and stay clean in business."

Fashionably delicious

Wear your love for *kopitiam* food

GLOBAL apparel retailer Uniqlo is celebrating Malaysia's love for local flavours with a new collaboration with traditional *kopitiam* brand Oriental Kopi.

Drawing inspiration from Oriental Kopi's rich Hainanese culinary heritage, the collaboration captures the nostalgic charm of Malaysia's iconic *kopitiam* culture, featuring nine exclusive UTme! designs on signature *kopitiam* dishes, from nasi lemak, polo buns and egg tarts that are loved by many Malaysians.

Available exclusively through UTme!, Uniqlo's interactive customisation service, this collaboration brings new life to LifeWear by allowing customers to co-create designs that celebrate Malaysia's rich food and fashion culture.

With Oriental Kopi-inspired graphics, customers can mix, match and personalise their favourite designs to create one-of-a-kind T-shirts and tote bags that express their love for local flavours.

Those who prefer ready-made options can also shop exclusive pre-printed T-shirts and tote bags featuring the Oriental Kopi designs, available at Uniqlo Mid Valley Megamall and Uniqlo Suria KLCC while custom printing is offered at selected outlets, including The Exchange TRX, Fahrenheit 88, Sunway Pyramid and Mid Valley Southkey in Johor Bahru.

Adult T-shirts are priced at RM79.90, kids' T-shirts at RM59.90 and tote bags at RM79.90.



The T-shirts and tote bags celebrate Malaysia's culinary heritage, allowing consumers to carry a little piece of *kopitiam* culture with them while also staying trendy.



The Mamee Monster × Christy Ng collection lets Mamee Monster fans make a fashion statement and step out in style.

Mamee Monster, Christy Ng collaboration

MALAYSIAN snack brand Mamee Monster has teamed up with local fashion brand Christy Ng to unveil a bold and playful collection of bags and snacks, blending nostalgia, creativity and local pride into a vibrant celebration of culture.

"We wanted to reimagine Mamee Monster beyond the snack aisle. This collaboration with Christy Ng allows us to bring the iconic blue monster and beloved snack to life in a whole new way not just through the bags, but also through limited edition snack packs that match the collection. It's a celebration of fun, fashion and childhood memories," said Mamee-Double Decker chief marketing officer How Yuan Yi.

The limited edition Mamee Monster × Christy Ng bag collection comprises a vibrant lineup of five playful tote bags, sling bags and mini crossbodies where each piece celebrates the cheeky charm of Mamee Monster and is designed to balance fun with wearability.

Expect bold blues, playful graphics and iconic elements from the Mamee Monster snack all elevated with Christy Ng's signature design approach.

"We drew inspiration from the snack's packaging, Monster's expressive personality and the joy it brings to Malaysians of all ages. Our goal was to create pieces that spark joy and conversation. These bags are more than accessories, they're wearable memories," said Christy Ng.

To add even more excitement to the collaboration, Mamee Monster gamified the snacking experience with a fun and interactive Find and Win mechanic. Each limited-edition pack contains a card and if you are lucky enough to find a winner card, you can stand to win the exclusive Mamee Monster × Christy Ng bags or vouchers.

Winners just need to scan the QR code on the tag to access a dedicated game page, where they will enter a unique code to unlock a digital game experience to discover what prize they have won. This experience is available from now until Dec 31.

The Mamee Monster × Christy Ng bags are also available for purchase at Christy Ng boutiques and through their online shops.

Mamee Monster × Christy Ng limited edition packs are available in three flavours, including BBQ, hot and spicy, and chicken. They can be found at all major supermarkets, hypermarkets, mini-markets, petrol marts and convenience stores nationwide, as well as Mamee Jonker House in Malacca.

Indulge in Korean flavours

KOREAN convenience store chain CU Malaysia has partnered with the Korea Agro-Fisheries and Food Trade Corporation (aT), a South Korean government agency, to promote authentic Korean food and lifestyle experiences to Malaysians through nationwide promotions and cultural events.

As part of this collaboration, CU Malaysia is running a K-food promotion across all 160 outlets nationwide. The promotion highlights a variety of imported Korean snacks and beverages, bringing high-quality Korean products to Malaysian customers.

Through this campaign, shoppers can enjoy special deals such as "Buy 2, Get 1 Free" on selected snacks and a K-food combo set at RM11.90, featuring CU *tteokbokki*, cantabile fruit drinks and Istea pouch beverages.

The nationwide K-food campaign complements the ongoing K-Fresh Universe Malaysia 2025, the first-ever Korean food and lifestyle festival in Malaysia.

The 10-day event will be held until Nov 2 at Mytown Shopping Centre (Town Park & Sunken Garden) in Kuala Lumpur. It will feature a lively showcase of premium Korean fruits, authentic food ingredients and freshly made Korean delicacies crafted from top-quality Korean produce.

Visitors can also enjoy a vibrant marketplace offering a wide range of K-snacks, desserts and beverages. CU Malaysia will feature its signature Korean favourites, including CU *tteokbokki*, Korean corn sausage, CU *gimbap* and other popular Korean drinks and desserts.

The K-Fresh Universe Malaysia 2025 festival will run daily from 10am to 10pm and admission is free for all visitors. Experience authentic Korean food, culture and fun through combo deals, premium K-snacks and genuine Korean products imported directly from Korea.



CU Malaysia is running a K-food promotion across all 160 outlets nationwide.



FOODIE CORNER



NakNak Fiery Geprek Series

Price: Fiery Geprek Burger (RM16.90), Fiery Geprek NakDak (RM15.90)

Named for its hot *sambal* and the much-loved *geprek* style of smashed chicken, this series puts a bold NakNak twist to create two new must-try dishes – the Fiery Geprek Burger and the Fiery Geprek NakDak. The burger comes with golden, crispy fried chicken thigh topped with NakNak's signature *sambal* chilli, crispy fried cabbage and rich black *kicap* mayo, all nestled between soft, buttery toasted buns. The NakDak is made with tender, boneless Korean-style chicken thigh freshly cooked to golden perfection, and is topped with the same condiments. Great for those who crave that addictive *sambal* kick, this lineup promises to turn up the heat and take Malaysia's love for spicy food to the next level.



Alce Nero organic pasta

Alce Nero's organic pasta is made from premium organic durum wheat, naturally rich in fibre and nutrients, and cultivated without pesticides, herbicides or chemical fertilisers. Alce Nero also works with organic farmers who nurture their crops in GMO-free, pesticide-free fields to ensure authentic and wholesome goodness in every bite. Paired with their organic sauces, olive oils or vinegars, every dish becomes a wholesome satisfying meal.



Lapisan Patisserie desserts and matcha beverages

Price: Jalur Harimau Croissant (RM12.00), Decadent Choc Mud (RM18.00), Triple Cheese Delight (RM13.00), Tiramisu/Mango/Choco Hazelnut/Biscoff Maritozzo (RM11.00), Iced Pandan Matcha Latte/Iced Strawberry Matcha Latte (RM14.20)

Known for blending French-style bakery with local passion, Lapisan Patisserie launched a collection of delectable pastries and beverages aimed at elevating the senses and satisfying every palate.



Luckin Coffee Peach Flavour Series

The limited-time "Pretty in Pink" beverage series was launched in conjunction with its collaboration with GrabFood. This peach-inspired lineup is designed to bring a refreshing, thirst-quenching twist to coffee and lifestyle lovers. The flavours include Peach Americano, Peach Fizzy Americano, Peach Jasmine Frappe and Peach Refresher.



K Fry Jjuk Jjuk 4 Sauces Drumsticks

Authentic and *halal*-certified Korean comfort food, K Fry Urban Korean is turning up the heat with its latest creation, the Jjuk Jjuk 4 sauces drumsticks. Featuring two bold new sauces, including the garlic parm truffle aioli, chilli padi aji aerde, spicy *yangnyeom* and honey mustard. This mouth-watering lineup adds a delicious new twist to K Fry's signature fried chicken experience.



Oreo Babymonster limited edition marshmallow cookies

Oreo has partnered with a new generation of K-pop icons, Babymonster, to co-create the cookie experience from the inside out. Inspired by one of Korea's hottest dessert trends, Oreo reveals the limited-edition Oreo Babymonster Red Sandwich Cookies with Marshmallow Flavoured Creme, in celebration of the group's bold identity.



Secret Recipe cake premix

Price: RM13.00 per box

Created for aspiring home bakers or anyone looking to enjoy a fun and meaningful activity with loved ones, each box comes complete with pre-measured ingredients and easy-to-follow instructions, making it simple to bake delicious brownies, cakes and muffins at home.

Available in three delectable flavours, including fudgy brownie mix, butterlicious cake mix and classic chocolate muffin mix, these offerings are rich in flavour and easy on effort.


From high-end experimental boutique cafes to the humble sidewalk cart, millions of cups of java are sold every day.

Brewing crisis

Java-loving New Yorkers confront soaring coffee costs

NEW Yorkers run on coffee. From high-end experimental boutique cafes to the humble sidewalk cart, millions of cups of java are sold every day.

But coffee-lovers are facing increasing pain as they pay for their simple espresso shots and elaborate pumpkin spiced lattes as the cost of beans has jumped 21% between August 2024 and August 2025 in the US, the world's largest market for coffee.

Climate shocks drove the cost of arabica soaring, with the beans hitting an all-time high in February 2025. That has been compounded by elevated transport costs and the 50% tariffs imposed by President Donald Trump since Aug 6 on many products from Brazil.

Brazil, the largest coffee producer, has been sanctioned by the Trump administration for its prosecution of former president Jair Bolsonaro for a coup attempt. It supplies 30% of the US's unroasted beans.

"It's having a major impact on us, on small business owners, on farmers, across the board," New York-based chain Birch Coffee co-founder Jeremy Lyman told AFP.

Founded in 2009, the brand has 14 outlets citywide, roasting its own specialty coffee in Queens since 2015.

"The price of coffee on the market has just been on a steady incline over the last probably year. I think it's gone up about 55% from this time last year... it's impacting the prices that we charge," Lyman said.

He said Brazil's production had become "unaffordable", forcing Birch to look elsewhere for beans with its importer "pushing pause" on its orders unless specially requested.

Cecafe, the Council of Coffee Exporters of Brazil, reported exports to the US have dropped almost 53% as of September compared with the year before with importers looking instead to Mexico, Peru and Ethiopia.

United by coffee

Lyman acknowledged market forces have meant price hikes for his customers, with Birch adding 50 cents to cups sold in-store, and US$2 (RM8.44) to US$3 per bag of roasted coffee sold online.

"Typically, it'll be small, incremental (increases) because it also helps us get a little bit more time to navigate how we're going to be sourcing," he said, adding that he tried to give customers two weeks of warning.

Other cafes have adopted a novel approach: adding an adjustable premium to the base price of each cup according to what level Trump has set tariffs that day, Lyman said.

But customers will only swallow so much, the Birch founder said, warning of a real risk of losing customers. Jason Nickel, 45, said while he still seeks out a daily caffeine hit, he is "a little more careful about where I go".

He cannot imagine paying more than US$6 a cup, including tip, for cortado – an espresso shot with a dash of milk foam.

Anna Simonovsky, 32, said her upper limit had gone from US$7 for a latte, a milkier, frothier drink than a cortado, to as much as US$10. She enjoys coffee as a treat for special occasions, such as a visit with a friend.

Trump recently threw a lifeline to the two-thirds of Americans who drink coffee daily when he placed coffee on a list of products not cultivated by US farmers in sufficient quantity – potentially exempting it from tariffs, alongside tea and cocoa.

And in a rare glimmer of bipartisanship, coffee-loving Republicans and Democrats are jointly sponsoring a bill intended to protect coffee products.


New Yorkers run on coffee. – ***PICS FROM AFP***



A display shows prices of various coffee and tea drinks at a coffee shop in New York City.

World Food Prize winners call for doubling of aid to combat hunger

INTERNATIONAL food aid must double to meet the needs of about two billion people worldwide who struggle to get enough to eat, said winners of an annual prize recognising contributions to reducing global hunger.

The World Food Prize was started in 1986 by Nobel Peace Prize winner Norman Borlaug, a US agronomist whose work with high-yield crops in the 1960s has been credited with saving one billion lives.

A group of 28 prize winners, including Brazilian microbiologist Mariangela Hungria who received the award this year, issued the call during the Norman Borlaug Dialogue – an annual conference in Des Moines, Iowa.

The UN World Food Programme recently reported global food aid was cut by 40% in 2025. The US, previously a top donor, slashed aid under President Donald Trump, and other governments such as the UK and France also reduced assistance.

WFP cut aid in Democratic Republic of Congo by 75% and halved a hot meal programme in Haiti due to lack of funds, WFP assistant executive director Valerie Guarnieri said during the conference.

"Donors are slashing their donations, for a variety of reasons," she said.

"There will be lives that will be lost, and global instability will increase."

David Beckmann, the 2010 prize winner and former president of non-governmental organisation Bread for the World, said famine was a problem in Sudan, Yemen, Gaza and Haiti, among other places.

"When the need for help increased, the money was not there," he said.

World Central Kitchen (nonprofit) founder Chef Jose Andres has not won the World Food Prize, but he joined the appeal.

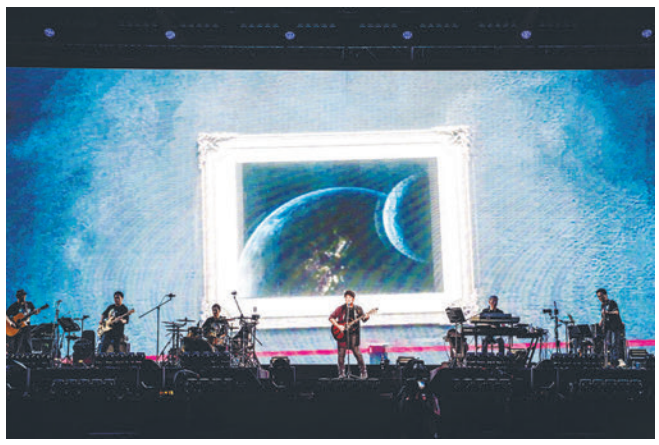
"Immigration is increasing and will keep increasing. The main reason people leave their countries is hunger," he told reporters.

The World Food Prize honours work in fields such as nutrition, environmental conservation, policy advocacy, rural development and plant and soil science. – Reuters


A malnourished child is fed with Ready-to-use Supplementary Food by her mother. – ***REUTERSPIC***




Hua Xin's lyrics are flashed on screen, enabling fans to sing along.


Chau and his all-male band deliver a memorable show.



'Thank you, Kuala Lumpur' is displayed, cheered on by fans.

Telling life stories through songs

Wakin Chau brings back nostalgic memories of best hits in KL concert

BY **EE ANN NEE**

NOTHING beats listening to Mandopop singer-songwriter Wakin Chau live at "The Younger Me Concerts Tour 3.0" in Kuala Lumpur (KL).

Chau's vocals are evocative and moving, with a warm, soothing and solid voice that resonates with audiences. Chau, 64, belted out 28 songs last Saturday night at his concert, including three encore songs, bringing back nostalgia through his timeless hits.

"*Terima kasih*, thank you very much. We meet again. I guess all of you here are those who have seen me when growing up. It has been some 30–40 years. Once again I come to KL, Malaysia and I thank all of you for your support," said Chau in his opening remarks.

Chau showed fans that neither did he need any fancy dance moves, nor any guests to entertain a full-house crowd at Axiata Arena. Just the best hits of Chau and his good, old self.

"The name of this concert is 'The Younger Me Concerts Tour 3.0'. Young man, I'm not. From a young man, to middle age, to the golden years today, as I look back, I find that it is a 'magical' journey. I believe when you look back, actually everyone will have a 'magical' journey. And if my songs have once been in the background, or even the main soundtrack in your life, let us cherish the moments and enjoy tonight," said Chau in Mandarin.

Chau kicked off the concert by setting it to sail, akin to a sea voyage to represent this life journey.

"Sometimes the sky is clear and sunny, sometimes there is storm and rain, isn't this what life is about?"

A tribute to his 40-year career, the concert showcased Chau's musical odyssey and vocal prowess. The upgraded production, dubbed 3.0, saw layered LED backdrops, dynamic lightings and stagecraft.

Chau also revealed that he bought a property in Malaysia.

"35 years ago, I came here (Malaysia) for the first time and I like it here. I thought to myself, one day, I want to buy a property here. So many years have passed and I have bought it! I cannot use a foreigner's tone to communicate with all of you, isn't it? What if you're my neighbour? And I bump into you when buying groceries? It's a great place, a place worth (me) investing. I love KL. I love Malaysia," said Chau.

Chau single-handedly performed the duet song *Tian Xia You Qing Ren (People In Love)*, the song for *Shen Diao Xia Lv (The Return of the Condor Heroes)*, based on a *wuxia* novel by Jin Yong.

"It's a duet but because I want to buy property in Malaysia, I'm going to save up the money, so I will sing (the entire song)," quipped Chau.

Chau dedicated his latest song *Lei Si Hua Bian (Fragile Love)*, a Mandarin song with Cantonese narration of the prose by writer Chen Yu-chen, to Malaysian fans, given that most Malaysians are multi-lingual.

From the heartfelt warmth of *Peng You (Friends)* to the resolute *Feng Yu Wu Zu (Nothing Will Stop Me From Loving You)*, the tender *Rang Wo Huan Xi Rang Wo You (You Make Me Happy and Sad)* and classics such as *Hua Xin (Flowery Heart)* and *You Mei You Yi Shou Ge Hui Rang Ni Xiang Qi Wo (Any Song Reminds You of Me?)*, each hit transcends time, remaining as moving today as ever.


Singing in Mandarin and Cantonese, Chau also performs with the guitar.


Chau gives a thumbs up to long-time fans. – ***ALL PICS BY STAR PLANET***


Despite the years, Chau's powerful voice and charisma continue to captivate fans.

Melodic comeback

British singer Sam Wills returns with sophomore album *Speak*



Speak is Wills's sophomore album. – ***PICS COURTESY OF SAM WILLS***

BY **JOHN TAN**

FOR close to three years, Sam Wills invested his time on a small log cabin. Together with his friend Phairo, the English singer was building the cabin out of recycled pallets. The process, while strenuous, led to the birth of his debut album *Breathe*.

"It took a ridiculous amount of time as well. I was making the cabin while recording the first album. I would spend time building the cabin during the weekends, a couple of hours here and there," the UK singer told *theSun* over a Zoom call.

The efforts certainly paid off as *Breathe* shot Wills to fame, amassing over 450 million streams worldwide. The breakout single *Traingazing* became a viral hit on TikTok and Instagram, cementing Wills's place as a rising star.

Four years have passed since and Wills is ready to follow up the success with his sophomore album *Speak*. Blurring genre lines, the 12-track album sings off feelings of stagnation and escapism, as it plays in story order across themes of desperation, love and heartbreak.

Celebrating its release, Wills elaborates on the inspiration and process behind creating the lead single *Voicenotes* and the album.



Speak sings of feelings of stagnation and escapism.

How have you been taking in the positive feedback with *Voicenotes*?
It is always amazing to see a positive reaction to a song. It is always nerve-wrecking to put out new music because you pour so much into it. So, seeing the positive reception is a relief.

Tell us about the inspiration behind *Voicenotes*?
I was thinking about phones and how we communicate with each other. It has changed so much over the years. People communicate with voice notes now. They do not even send Whatsapp messages or texts, just voice notes to each other. So, naturally, you share a history of conversations with someone online. Even when they are no longer in your life, you still have that history. That is where the idea came from.

What was the songwriting process like?
With *Voicenotes*, I made it with my long-term collaborator and a good friend of mine called Phairo. It felt comfortable because we wrote it. We started it on the piano. I came up with the melody, which became the chorus melody. Phairo, then came up with the guitar part, which followed it. It was an easy-going writing process, which was nice. Not everything has to be a challenge.

How does *Voicenotes* complement *Speak*?
It brings an element that does not exist in the rest of the album, which has a more traditional jazz melody and harmony. I have tended to lean a bit more towards folk elements, but *Voicenotes* in particular fits a more jazz kind of area in the album.

How would you like *Speak* to introduce you to new and longtime listeners?
There are going to be parts of the album that people who enjoyed the first album will appreciate. There will be elements that will feel similar, having rich and dense harmonies as the first album. But, there will be more folky elements. There will be a level of sadness to it in parts. There is also some joy, production-wise. So, I hope *Speak* will please old fans as well as interest new ones.



Wills posing with the album cover.

Which track was the hardest to record?
Hardest in a technical sense was *Coulda Been Us*, which was the second single. I find lyrics quite difficult and I have to really take my time. When I write, often it is the chords and melodies that will come first. The odd line here or there comes later.

For this track, it was the second verse that I could not make as good as I wanted it to be. It might have even taken me two weeks at least. The more I tried, the harder it got. Eventually, I had to just stop for a few days and do something else.

So that was difficult, and it was tricky to mix as well. As for the other songs, it was the songs that did not make it to the album. We tried hard to make it work, but they just did not make it. But, they might come on a deluxe version.

What do you hope fans take away from *Speak*?
I hope it brings comfort to people. It draws on human experience that we have all felt at one point or another. The experience of feeling lost, and not knowing what direction life is heading in. It is music for people who do not say much but feel a lot. So, I hope it brings comfort and joy. That is my main goal for the album.

Any words for your Malaysian fans?
Thank you for being supportive. It is not something I pictured when I started making music that there will be people over the other side of the world who know and enjoy my music. I certainly hope to meet a lot of you in person in the next year or so. I have wanted to come over to Southeast Asia for personal reasons too. So, I am super excited about the possibility.



Wills hopes to perform in Malaysia soon.



Tame Impala drops fifth full-length album *Deadbeat*

Record follows three advance singles

TAME Impala (Kevin Parker) has released his fifth full-length album *Deadbeat*, deeply inspired by Australian bush doof culture and particularly the local scene centred around Margaret River in Western Australia in the 90s.

On *Deadbeat*, Parker explores a blend of club and psychedelic sounds as a vehicle for some of his most direct, brain-wormy songwriting to date. The record reimagines Tame Impala as a modern electronic project while maintaining Parker's distinct songwriting style.

Recorded between his hometown of Fremantle and Wave House studio in Injidup, the album reflects a more spontaneous and minimalist approach. It highlights Parker's refined production style and wider vocal range, balancing experimentation with precision.

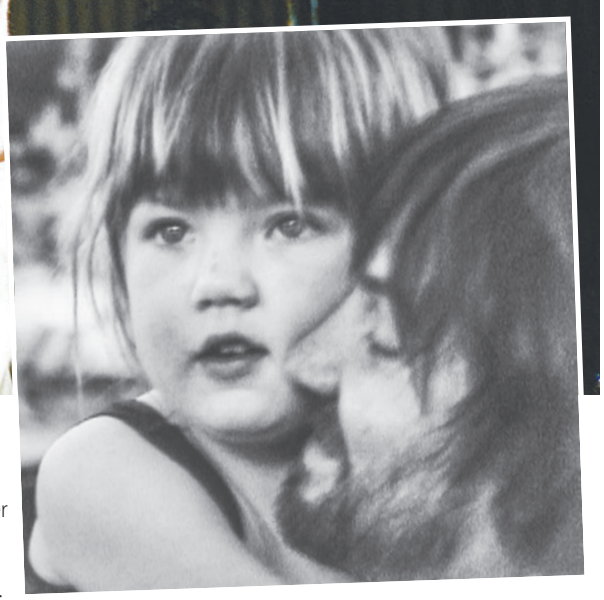
The album follows three advance singles – *Loser*, *End of Summer* and *Dracula*, which entered Billboard's Hot 100 and debuted on AAA and Alternative charts.

The release also includes a music video for the album opener *My Old Ways*, directed by Sam Kristofski, featuring footage of Parker recording in different locations around the world.

Over the past decade, Parker has worked with artistes such as Dua Lipa, The Weeknd, SZA, Lady Gaga, Travis Scott and Gorillaz. His earlier albums *InnerSpeaker*, *Lonerism*, *Currents* and *The Slow Rush* have received multiple Aria, Brit and Grammy nominations, with *The Slow Rush* topping charts worldwide.



Parker explores a blend of club and psychedelic sounds on his latest album *Deadbeat*.



The album cover features Parker with his daughter Peach.

Labit releases 18-track *Sol*

FILIPINO-AMERICAN singer and songwriter Labit, also known as Stephen Ordonez, has released his debut album *Sol*. Named in honour of his grandmother Solita (Grandma Sol), *Sol* is a widescreen coming-of-age statement that turns kitchen-table wisdom, late-night truth-talks and hard-won self-belief into vivid storytelling.

Across 18 tracks, Labit blends honeyed vocals, warm analog textures and diaristic lyrics into songs that feel lived-in and cinematic at once. Whether he is reflecting on family, identity or the tender chaos of growing up, the result is a body of work that feels intimate yet expansive – rooted in real life, but resonating far beyond it.

"*Sol* is me taking stock of who raised me, what shaped me and how to move forward with grace. These songs are about finding clarity: in love, in family and in myself," said the singer.

In the advance singles, Labit had already started sketching out the album's emotional arc. *Mangoes and Rice* is an intimate love letter to growing up Filipino-American – written as a conversation with his sister and brought to life in a video that foregrounds heritage, family and community. With *Cleaning Out the Fridge* (ft. Emily Rowed), Labit leans into radical honesty: "airing it out", tearing down walls and choosing to rebuild. With *Parallel*, he captures the a-ha clarity of finding love right beside you. The video reimagines an iconic "song-in-the-back-seat" moment inside a family Buick LeSabre, the same car that Grandma Sol drove him around in as a child, as another nostalgic nod to her influence.

The record's palette moves from soft-focus nostalgia to full-colour uplift: late-night confessions that spill into sunrise (*February*), the anxious comedy of trying to keep up (*All My Plants are Dying*) and the quiet strength of choosing the right person in a chaotic season (*Better*). Throughout, recurring motifs – cars, kitchens, seasons – tie the chapters together, while Labit's upfront vocal and conversational writing keep the storytelling close.

Sol features the previously released singles alongside new standouts such as title track *Sol*, a quiet dedication to the grandmother whose name, counsel and compassion echo throughout the album.



Labit is known for his heartfelt lyricism, evocative melodies and ability to make the deeply personal feel universal. **– *PIC BY ERICA HERNANDEZ***

Reflecting growing regional momentum, Labit's singles leading up to his debut album have earned coveted placements on Spotify's New Music Friday playlists across Asia – including the Philippines, Thailand, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Vietnam. Asian markets dominate his top 10 audience: India (second), Indonesia (third), Philippines (fourth), Thailand (seventh), Taiwan (eighth) and Malaysia (10th), and his top five streaming cities are based in Southeast Asia. Since debuting in 2019, his ability to connect across borders and cultures is rooted in honest storytelling and a sonic versatility that transcends genre.

For Labit, *Sol* captures that ongoing process of self-discovery – written as a personal journal while navigating the intricacies of adulthood, finding strength in vulnerability and grace in growth.



ID:Earth is a Seoul-based singer-songwriter and film composer.

South Korean alt-pop artiste unveils *Utopia*

ALTERNATIVE pop artiste ID:Earth has released her latest single *Utopia,* the lead single to her forthcoming EP *[Utopia]* that continues her exploration of civilisation, technology and humanity's future.

The single poses a central question, making listeners ponder the utopian dreams of humanity.

"The utopia presented is not a mere idealised paradise, but a dimension where the preservation of analog values coexists with technologies essential for the future," explained the singer.

The accompanying music video brings the singer's cosmic vision to life, offering a visual companion to the track's philosophical themes.

Building on her cinematic soundscapes and experimental approach, the new single showcases her signature dreamy vocal tone while pushing into bold new sonic territory. Her upcoming *[Utopia]* EP will mirror this too, transcending traditional boundaries through its innovative lyrical approach.

"Just as seeds are preserved for the future descendants of Earth, the album envisions a world where the most essential values endure. In *[Utopia]*, love itself is also part of this ideal, proposing a society that follows the laws of nature while embracing the curiosity of new life and ultimately asking whether we can take responsibility for the choices we make," said ID: Earth.

ID:Earth, which means "the identity of the Earth", has been recognised for her cinematic soundscapes and experimental approach.

Her puzzle-like single series *Alien* and sophomore album *Space Station* have established her as a unique voice in alternative pop, with her music featured in various Korean movies and television series.

302 Jobs

theSun Malaysian Paper

WITH OUR DIGITAL EXPANSION, WE ARE HIRING!

1) Executive/Senior, IT
2) Assistant Manager/Manager, IT

Responsibilities:

- For Manager/Assistant Manager - Manage and oversee the daily operations of the IT department, with supervisory skills.
- Oversee the design, implementation, and maintenance of networks, servers, databases and IT platforms.
- Lead the IT team in delivering effective support and services across the group. Plan and manage the IT budget, including resource allocation, expenditure tracking and cost optimization.
- Assist the IT team in delivering effective support and services across the group.
- Develop, implement, and manage IT strategy, infrastructure, and operations.
- Provide technical support and resolve hardware and software issues.
- Monitor system and website performance, ensuring data security and integrity.
- Undertake any other assignments as directed by management.

Requirements:

- Diploma/Bachelor's degree in Information Technology or related field.
- Asst Manager/Manager: Minimum 5+ years' working experience in IT, with proven leadership or supervisory skills.
- Executive/Senior: Minimum 1+ years' working experience in IT.
- Strong knowledge of systems, networks, and software applications.
- Excellent analytical and problem-solving abilities.
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills.
- Independent, reliable, and able to provide 24/7 standby support when required.

Send in your CV with your photo via email to:
thesun.hr2@gmail.com / hr@thesundaily.com

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

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF P S LOH & PARTNERS SDN. BHD. [201101026188 (954324-D)]

At Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of P S Loh & Partners Sdn. Bhd. held on 18 October 2025 , the following Special Resolution was duly passed:-

"THAT the Company be wound up voluntarily pursuant to Section 439(1)(b) of the Companies Act, 2016 AND THAT Mr. Soo Tong Hui of No. 129A, Jalan Genting Klang, Setapak, 53300 Kuala Lumpur, be and is hereby appointed as Liquidator to act for the purpose of winding-up the company's affairs and distributing its assets."

LOH POH SOON
Director
25 October 2025

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF P S LOH & PARTNERS SDN. BHD. [201101026188 (954324-D)] (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of the abovenamed company which is being wound up voluntarily are required on or before 24 November 2025 to send their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned, the Liquidator of the said Company; and if so required in writing from the said, are by their solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefits of any distribution made before such debts are proven.

Soo Tong Hui
Liquidator
No. 129A, Jalan Genting Klang,
Setapak, 53300 Kuala Lumpur

Dated this 25 October 2025

322 Notices

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF MASCONSULT SDN. BHD. [199501024465 (353670-K)]

At Extraordinary General Meeting of the members of Masconsult Sdn. Bhd. held on 18 October 2025 , the following Special Resolution was duly passed:-

"THAT the Company be wound up voluntarily pursuant to Section 439(1)(b) of the Companies Act, 2016 AND THAT Mr. Soo Tong Hui of No. 129A, Jalan Genting Klang, Setapak, 53300 Kuala Lumpur, be and is hereby appointed as Liquidator to act for the purpose of winding-up the company's affairs and distributing its assets."

LIM THIAM WAH
Director
25 October 2025

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT, 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF MASCONSULT SDN. BHD. [199501024465 (353670-K)] (IN MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING-UP)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the creditors of the abovenamed company which is being wound up voluntarily are required on or before 24 November 2025 to send their names and addresses with particulars of their debts or claims and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned, the Liquidator of the said Company; and if so required in writing from the said, are by their solicitors or personally to come in and prove their debts or claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice or in default thereof they will be excluded from the benefits of any distribution made before such debts are proven.

Soo Tong Hui
Liquidator
No. 129A, Jalan Genting Klang,
Setapak, 53300 Kuala Lumpur

Dated this 25 October 2025

322 Notices

FOCAL PARK SDN BHD (358698-H)
NOTIS LELONG AWAM KENDERAAN UNTUK DILELONG SEPERTI SEDIA ADA

TEMPAT & TARIKH LELONG : Northern Region (Alor Setar, Butterworth & Ipoh) 30-10-2025 (Khamis) Pukul 11:00pagi

TARIKH MELIHAT : SEBELUM TIGA HARI LELONG (Pukul 9:00pagi - 4:00petang)

PERTANYAAN (Tel): Butterworth 04-3567972, Alor Seter 04-787 7972, Ipoh 05-5293971

FPAC - PELELONG BERLESEN : a) Mr. Chew Wooi Kok ,
b) Mr. Steven Lim Peng Seng (02097),
c) Pn Hasniza Binti Abu Samah (01038)

Alamat : 352, Permatang Tok Jaya Maklom Sg Dua 13800 Butterworth.
: Lot 138-A, Batu 5 Jalan Langgar 05460 Alor Setar
: PT51683, Jalan Jelapang, Kws Perindustrian Tmn Meru 30020 Ipoh

SILA LAYARI LAMAN WEB KAMI : http://www.focalpark.com.my

Item	Reg No	Jenis & Model	Tahun
AM1	ALB1825	HONDA ACCORD VTI-L 2.0	2018
AM2	WNX1733	HONDA CITY 1.5 VTEC (A)	2006
AM3	AHH4294	NISSAN SENTRA Comfort (A) 1.6i (Impul)	2010
AM4	AKW9077	PERODUA BEZZA 1.3	2018
AM5	AJG8852	PERODUA MYVI 1.3D3EZS (A)	2013
AM6	WSH1488	PERODUA MYVI 1.3	2009
AM7	WC6428L	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2015
AM8	AKH8995	PROTON SAGA 1.3 CVT	2016
AM9	AEL3591	PROTON WIRA 1.3GL	2001
AM10	AJV472	PERODUA MYVI 1.3	2014
AM11	AGV172	SUZUKI - S CROSS CVT	2014
AM12	WNB3001	TOYOTA VIOS 1.5	2005
AM13	VAH8432	MAZDA CX3 SKYACTIV 2.0 2WD	2017
AM14	JUF9483	PERODUA BEZZA 1.3	2020

(Perhatian: Kenderaan-kenderaan diatas yang tidak dibida dalam perlelongan akan dilelong semula pada 06-11-2025)

Connolly star for Aussies

A COMPOSED 74 from Matt Short and a maiden half-century by Cooper Connolly steered Australia to a two-wicket win over India yesterday, sealing the three-match one-day series with a game to go.

After India made 264-9 at a sold-out Adelaide Oval on the back of Rohit Sharma's 73, the hosts reached their target with 22 balls remaining.

Short, who was twice dropped, led the charge before Connolly (61 not out) and Mitch Owen (36) finished the job.

Australia won a rain-affected opening game in Perth by seven wickets, with the dead-rubber clash in Sydney on Saturday.

"It's awesome and rapt to have won the series," said Australia skipper Mitch Marsh, who won the toss and sent India in.

"(Josh) Hazlewood was unbelievable, the whole bowling unit kept trying to pick up wickets and awesome batting. We'll certainly enjoy the series win."

The hosts made a tentative start to the chase with Marsh falling for 11 to Arshdeep Singh after swinging wildly.

Travis Head also departed softly, thick-edging Harshit Rana to Virat Kohli on 28.

Short was joined by Matt Renshaw and they got the scoreboard moving with quick singles, putting on 55.

But spin bamboozled Renshaw, bowled for 30 by Axar Patel, then Alex Carey, dismissed for nine by Washington Sundar attempting a sweep shot.

Short kept his focus, making a third ODI half-century, before departing to Rana, caught on the ropes as he tried to up the tempo.

Some power-hitting from Owen, who slammed two fours and three sixes, left them needing 50 from the last 10 overs, a target reached after some late jitters.

"I think we had just enough runs on the board… it's never easy to defend those totals when you drop a couple of catches," said India skipper Shubman Gill.

"There was a little bit in the wicket initially, but as the ball got older it got better to bat on."

Earlier, quick Hazlewood opened with 13 dot balls, but it was Xavier Bartlett who got the breakthrough for Australia.

In the team for Nathan Ellis, he tempted Shubman down the pitch only to chip an easy catch to Marsh at mid-off.

That brought Virat to the crease and after an eight-ball duck in Perth the 36-year-old was keen for runs.

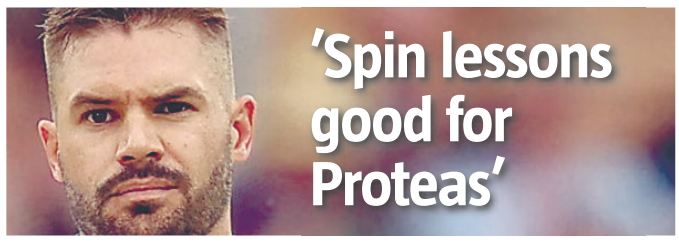
But he lasted just four deliveries with Bartlett trapping him lbw to leave India reeling at 17-2.

It was the first time Virat has been dismissed for consecutive ducks in his long ODI career.

Rohit weathered the storm, reaching a 59th half-century. Shreyas Iyer (61) ably played a supporting role until Mitchell Starc broke their 118-run partnership.

He removed Rohit in the first over of his second spell, with Hazlewood collecting a mistimed pull shot in the deep.

Iyer fell three overs later to Adam Zampa, who also accounted for KL Rahul (11), Patel (44) and Nitish Kumar Reddy (8). – AFP



'Spin lessons good for Proteas'

SKIPPER Aiden Markram *(pic)* says lessons learnt from the spin-dominated drawn Test series in Pakistan will put South Africa in good stead for their tour of India next month.

South Africa gave Pakistan a taste of their own spin medicine with a clinical eight-wicket drubbing in the second Test in Rawalpindi on Thursday, levelling the two-match series 1-1.

The victory gives South Africa an ideal start to the defence of the World Test Championship title they won in June.

Markram, standing in for injured skipper Temba Bavuma, warmly praised his team's spirited fightback.

"After the first Test we were put under pressure and the guys have put their hands up and excelled," said Markram.

South Africa took a good 71-run lead in the first innings of the second Test before Simon Harmer took a career-best 6-50 to bowl Pakistan out for a paltry 138 on Thursday.

The visitors knocked off the winning 68-run target for the loss of two wickets on day four.

"We have taken a lot of confidence from this win and we are in a great space to be in as a team.

"But we are still a work in progress in these conditions as we now head to India."

South Africa play the first of two Tests against India in Kolkata from Nov 14.

Markram said his spin quartet was up to the challenge.

"The unit out here had quality spinners," said Markram of Keshav Maharaj, Simon Harmer, Senuran Muthusamy and Prenelan Subrayen. – who between them took 35 of the 40 wickets in the series.

Pakistan skipper Shan Masood rued his side's batting in the series.

"There is a lot to work on," said Shan who has now lost 10 of the 14 Test as skipper.

"The lower order batting, finishing the innings of the opposition.

"And our third innings batting are not perfect."

FOLLOW theSun Malaysian Paper ON YOUTUBE
/theSunMedia
SCAN ME

Jitters in McLaren paddock

McLaren in danger of catastrophic collapse as Verstappen manoeuvres into slipstream

BY **KIERAN JACKSON**

IT'S TOUGH not to overstate just how unfathomable the current positioning at the top of the F1 drivers' championship was just two months ago.

Rewind four races and Max Verstappen trailed Oscar Piastri by 104 points. For all intents and purposes, it was a McLaren intra-team title battle. A surefire thing.

Whether it be Oscar Piastri or Lando Norris, the winner in Abu Dhabi on Dec 7 would be adorned in bright papaya.

Now, the outlook is not so black and white. Indeed, now the future looks like a blanket of orange, with dark blue and red splattered all over it.

An individual title that looked genuinely unlosable for McLaren, such was their irrepressible dominance for most of this season, is now in danger of a catastrophic collapse.

For Verstappen, who had long dismissed his chances of a fifth consecutive title (a feat only matched by Michael Schumacher before him), it was the perfect sprint weekend in Austin.

Two pole positions, two race wins, and a maximum 33 points to his name. Even the Dutchman, who has at times been visibly unbothered by this season's trials and tribulations at Red Bull, is now licking his lips.

"For sure, the (title) chance is there," he told Martin Brundle below the podium, immediately after his dominant victory at the United States Grand Prix on Sunday.

"We just need to try and deliver these kinds of weekends until the end. It's exciting and I'm excited until the end."

Verstappen's gap is now 40 points to Piastri, with five races left and 141 points to play for. Norris, who at least recovered from a slow start to finish second on Sunday, is just 14 points off his teammate.

Out of nothing, the tide is turning dramatically against the previously unflappable Australian.

"The pressure builds when things start going wrong; it's difficult to find your way out of that scenario," 2009 F1 world champion and ex-McLaren driver Jenson Button told *Sky Sports*.

"This is pressure no racing driver feels until you're fighting for a title in Formula One."

Button can empathise with Piastri's plight. Back in '09, the Briton inched his way over the finish line, failing to win any of the last 10 races in a freak year of dominance by the one-and-done Brawn team.

A more relevant year for McLaren would be 2007: Lewis Hamilton's rookie year, in which the toxic intra-team feud with Fernando Alonso ultimately resulted in Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen nipping in at the death to take the drivers' title by one point.

It is a scenario that should be omnipresent in the minds of McLaren CEO Zak Brown and team principal Andrea Stella, as they look to arrest this current slide.

In the McLaren motorhome, all is not well. The Austin weekend started with the borderline ludicrous discussion around "repercussions" for Norris, following his minor contact with Piastri at the last race in Singapore. McLaren didn't act then, nor did the stewards. Why the need to stoke the fire a fortnight on? Why give half a story, without specifying what such "repercussions" are?

While teams are of course allowed to keep discreet matters in-house, the level of ambiguity was jarring.

The general understanding among the paddock is that the "repercussions" mean minor sporting advantages will lean in Piastri's favour.

Say, for instance, a tow in qualifying for the Australian, at venues with long straights such as round 22 in Las Vegas, to give Piastri an extra speed boost for pole position.

The whole discussion, however, was thrust further into the spotlight after a torrid weekend in which both McLaren drivers collided and crashed out of the sprint race on Saturday. If anything, this time it was Piastri who was at fault.

It is a can of worms that, to a large degree, was avoidable. McLaren could still have a decision on their hands: they could still make either Piastri or Norris their No. 1 driver, to increase their chances of stopping Verstappen. But they won't; it's too far gone now. Even Piastri knows it.

"I dunno, I don't think so," the Australian replied when asked if McLaren should make him No. 1 after his fifth-place finish on Sunday.

"We're still incredibly tight. We both wanted an opportunity to fight for the championship because we deserve it. I think it's far too close to start picking one or the other."

Fighting talk? Not exactly. Piastri, on track, has definitely hit a rut at just the wrong time. He complained all weekend of feeling "out of rhythm" with the car, seemingly struggling with the heavy crosswinds more than most in qualifying. Lacking in confidence, the 24-year-old needs a reset in Mexico this weekend.

Yet the McLaren creaks are starting to rear their head. If anything, despite the points discrepancy, Norris appears best-placed right now to seize the initiative.

Certainly, the team (particularly Piastri) need to get back to consistent podiums at a minimum. There's a championship to win – a first drivers' crown since Hamilton in 2008 – and they are the ones with the points on the board.

Norris could well have passed Verstappen in Austin's grand prix if he hadn't ceded second place to Charles Leclerc at the start.

The Dutchman's newfound jolt of speed at Red Bull is not insurmountable.

But make no mistake: there is a caffeine-induced, title-hungry energy drink surging up behind McLaren right now. Red Bull's subtle mechanical upgrades, such as moving the skid blocks underneath the floor of the car to improve the aerodynamics, have given their leading man a new lease of life.

Verstappen title assault has now diverged into a genuine three-horse race for the championship. And with favourable races on the horizon where the Dutchman has triumphed before – Mexico, Brazil and Vegas all favour him on paper – it seems an unprecedented comeback really could be in the offing. – The Independent



FROM LEFT: Lando Norris, Max Verstappen and Oscar Piastri. – ***AFPPIC***

McLaren gives drivers *carte blanche* to race

OSCAR PIASTRI confirmed yesterday that both he and McLaren teammate Lando Norris will start this weekend's Mexico City Grand Prix with a "clean slate" following their collision in Texas.

The title rivals, separated by 14 points with five Grands Prix remaining, crashed out during last Saturday's sprint race at the United States Grand Prix – an accident that resulted in Piastri accepting some of the blame.

"We review every weekend regardless of what's happened," he said.

"I think there is a degree of responsibility on my side for the sprint and we are starting this weekend with a clean slate for both of us. So, just going out racing."

McLaren had previously judged Norris to have been responsible for their collision in Singapore and told him he faced "repercussions" that would be exercised by the team.

These have now been cancelled, giving both McLaren men a freedom to fight for the title and resist the late charge of four-time champion Max Verstappen of Red Bull, who is third, 40 points behind Piastri after three wins in four races.

"The consequences on Lando's side have been removed," said Piastri, speaking to reporters at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez.

"There's a lot of factors involved, but ultimately, yes, that's what has been decided."

A calm Piastri said he felt confident he could defend his shrinking lead in the title race as Norris and Verstappen close in and referred to his three title triumphs in junior series including F3 and F2 as valuable experiences.

"Yes, the gap has shrunk a bit in the last few races," he said, when asked about the pressure from his rivals.

"But for me I have to focus on being as fast as I can and having good weekends. That's all I am focussed on and if I stay on top of that the rest of it doesn't matter.

"I prefer to be the hunted than the hunter. Both have positives and negatives and I know everyone likes the underdog comeback story, but I would rather lead because then I know I've been doing something right."

Asked about the long run to the first corner at the start, Piastri admitted it was likely to be a key part of Sunday's (Monday 4am Malaysian time) race. "It's tough to have that long run, but ultimately it's about making the right decisions and trusting your instincts. Deal with the situation that you've got. There's no magic formula!"

Equally, he said he was not thinking about Verstappen's form and experience.

"No, I don't think about it. He's been consistent and strong, yes, there's no denying that, but there is no benefit for me in thinking about that. For me, it's about myself, my car and my team.

"I've won championships in the past and have those to look back on so I know I can pull it off." – AFP

Glasner absolves teen Canvot of blame after Palace defeat

BY **RACHEL STEINBERG**

OLIVER GLASNER refused to blame any individuals after Crystal Palace suffered a 1-0 Conference League defeat to AEK Larnaca at Selhurst Park.

Riad Bajic's 51st-minute opener proved enough for the Cypriot side to stun the Eagles, who did not lack chances but were limited to just a single shot on target in the first major European home match in their history.

Jean-Philippe Mateta came closest to getting the FA Cup winners on the scoreboard, clipping the crossbar before the break, while Larnaca took advantage of Jaydee Canvot's error to break the deadlock.

"Nobody is blaming Jaydee for this mistake," said Glasner. "This happens, it's part of football, especially when you're a young player, this is part of your development.

"You will get all the support and then it's no problem. Of course he's not delighted to make this mistake, but every player with a big career, I think, missed a few chances and made some mistakes that led to a goal.

"He's one of thousands. He is not the first one and he won't be the last one."

Glasner, whose side next travel to Premier League leaders Arsenal, preferred to point the finger at Palace's lack of "efficiency", adding it felt like deja-vu that his side lacked the finishing touch.

He added: "This is what we can blame us for, but on the other side, no player does it on purpose. And now it's to support them, not to blame anybody.

"And now, OK, to keep going. If we have five clear chances and don't score, we will try to create seven, eight or nine the next time.

"We will learn from it, the players will learn. And yes, it's disappointing, it's a frustrating night, but maybe the whole environment needed it to stay humble," Glasner added.

"You are always told when you play in the Premier League you win the Conference League.

"Stay humble. I don't know if any debutant (is able) to win the competition. I don't think so." – The Independent/Reuters

Sigh of relief

Gibbs-White 'can finally breathe' after Forest beat Porto



Morgan Gibbs-White celebrates scoring the opening goal from the penalty spot against Porto. – *AFPPIC*

MORGAN GIBBS-WHITE feels like he "can finally breathe" again after Nottingham Forest put a difficult few months behind them with a Europa League victory against Porto in Sean Dyche's first game.

The Reds had not won since the opening day of the season, leading to popular boss Nuno Espirito Santo's sacking and successor Ange Postecoglou being axed on Saturday after just 39 days in charge.

Dyche became Forest's third manager of the season on Tuesday and two days later oversaw a much-needed 2-0 victory against previously unbeaten Porto as the City Ground celebrated a first European win in 30 years.

Igor Jesus' spot-kick wrapped things up after skipper Gibbs-White opened the scoring with a penalty of his own as a difficult 10-match winless run in all competitions finally came to an end.

"I feel like I can finally breathe," the Forest captain told *TNT Sports*.

"It's been a difficult couple of months here with all the change that's happened, the bad performances, so just happy to get our first win out of eight or nine games I think it is.

"To do it here at the City Ground on a European night is an incredible feeling and there's no-one that deserves it more than the fans. Those three points were for the fans for sticking by us."

Gibbs-White credited new boss Dyche for lifting the morale and making things feel "a lot more energetic, a lot more positive" – something the new boss felt in his side's display.

But the new Forest boss stressed this is just the first step for a side that sit 18th in the Premier League having secured just five points from the opening eight games.

"It's pleasing for everyone concerned with this football club," the new head coach said.

"It is a step, that's all it is, because the Premier League we have got to do well in that as well.

"We want a team that is competitive in all competitions, of course every manager does.

"Overall, this is a really great competition, with this club and its history in Europe to be back there after all them years.

"But let's face it, the Premier League we've got to change that – we've got to change the view of that – because that's important without a doubt."

As the Forest fans belted out *Mull of Kintyre*, their new manager looked around the City Ground to take it in.

Paul McCartney's song has been Forest's anthem since 1978 after its release in 1977, as the club charged to the First Division title under Brian Clough.

Decades later, the club's third manager of this season will hope to hear it countless times following his opening win over Porto.

It has been 35 years since he left Forest as a young professional to join Chesterfield and Dyche revelled in the Europa League atmosphere.

"I'd waited a long time for that moment. As a young person here in '87 all I wanted to do was wear the shirt," he said.

"To come back as the manager is super pleasing and to stand there and absorb it, I've learnt in life sometimes you have to slow your thinking down and take it in.

"So many big moments in life have been so nerve-wracking they just go and suddenly they are finished. So I thought 'take it in and put it in the memory.'" – The Independent/Agencies

Emery puts Villans on the spot

BY **JONATHAN VEAL**

ASTON VILLA boss Unai Emery said his side have to become more clinical from the penalty spot after a shock Europa League defeat to Dutch minnows Go Ahead Eagles.

Emiliano Buendia missed a late spot-kick as Villa squandered an early lead to suffer a 2-1 humbling in Deventer.

Evann Guessand put them on course for a sixth successive win in all competitions, but they missed a host of chances to kill the game and came unstuck as goals from Mathis Suray and Mats Deijl either side of half-time gave Go Ahead a famous victory in one of the biggest games in their history.

Buendia could have started a comeback but he blazed over from the spot in the 77th minute.

It was Villa's sixth missed penalty in the last 12 months, with Ollie Watkins missing against Bologna earlier this season, while they also lost a penalty shootout to Brentford in the Carabao Cup last month.

"Today the responsibility was for Emiliano Buendia," he said. "And normally he has good numbers shooting penalties, but he missed.

"Of course, something can happen, and we will try to get more clinical in the penalty shoot than the last penalties we have had.

"Our takers are clear. Buendia was today, (Jadon) Sancho, John McGinn, Morgan (Rogers) as well can shoot penalties.

"And, of course, Emiliano can repeat, but the idea is try to be so, so responsible about the decision and about the takers who can score."

Emery says the unexpected loss is par for the course, with Villa often coming unstuck on European away days over the last three seasons.

"And today showed us how difficult it is to play in Europe, to play away," he said.

"This is the reason I love football, because football has a lot of different ways to win. You can dominate, like we did, you have chances to score, but if we are conceding a few chances, maybe you can lose. And we did.

"Of course, I had a lot of experiences like today, and we have here with Aston Villa a lot of experiences like today.

"And sometimes we were performing very well and winning, and sometimes not winning. And this year, Feyenoord (on matchday two) we weren't playing very well.

"And today maybe we had more chances than them but we lost. And this is football. But we are very, very demanding, analysing deeply why you are better than the opponent but you are losing.

"But it's not a surprise for me. It's not a surprise, football is unpredictable."

Go Ahead Eagles are a provincial club based 60 miles east of Amsterdam who were playing in the Dutch second tier as recently as 2021. They won the Dutch Cup last season but matchwinner Deijl explained the historic nature of the win.

"I think the last few years we've had a lot of big wins, the big one was, of course, the cup final," he said.

"I think everyone expected us to have a really hard time in Europe, and I don't think anyone expected from us to do it like this.

"So we're very happy. And of course, this might be the biggest win so far for this club here." – The Independent

FOLLOW theSun Malaysian Paper ON INSTAGRAM
@thesundaily
SCAN ME

Rooney, Crouch call out 'bullying' of Maguire

WAYNE ROONEY and Peter Crouch reckon Harry Maguire has been unfairly treated during his time at Manchester United.

The 32-year-old centreback faces an uncertain future at Old Trafford after entering the final 12 months of his deal.

From January, foreign clubs will be eligible to approach Maguire about a free transfer in the summer – unless he puts pen to paper on fresh terms beforehand. Should the England international refuse to sign an extension, United will face a tough call.

The Red Devils must weigh up whether to let Maguire walk away for nothing at the season's end or cash in during the January window for a small portion of the £80 million (RM464m) they splashed out for his services back in 2019.

Reports suggest that United are in discussions with the player regarding a new contract, although no formal offer has been tabled yet.

Despite bailing out the Red Devils on countless occasions in the past, Rooney and Crouch feel the Englishman has been harshly treated and have taken umbrage at comments aimed at him by his critics.

Speaking on his podcast after United's 2-1 triumph over Liverpool, Rooney said: "Today shows why he should be in the World Cup squad. And I really mean that. I think he's so important.

"I think with Harry, I would really struggle to have dealt with what he's been through. You know, he was a meme for years.

"I've seen him in Parliament over in Africa somewhere, where he's getting brought up in that, and they're laughing at him.

"So for him to have dealt with so much, he's incredibly strong-minded to have gone through that. Then, getting the armband taken off him, and people laughing at him."

Rooney added: "You're like, this guy has been in World Cup teams of the tournament and been incredible for England, been really good for Man United, and it's completely unfair, and it was bullying.

"He was getting bullied from all over the place, and for him to have dealt with that and got through it and stuck with it, you'd have to say, 'You know what, that's a strong human being'.

"And for him to get through that and his family to get through that and come out the other side and show his ability and quality and strength, I couldn't be happier for him."

Echoing Rooney's sentiments, Crouch said on his podcast: "I'm just really, really pleased for him. Throughout my career, there have been points where I've been low and I've had a lot of grief, a lot of stick, so I kind of know what that's like.

"For him to get that amount of grief, it was above and beyond what is acceptable… Attacking his family, his personality, the way he looks, everything was wrong." – Agencies

Successful powwow

Van Dijk reveals Liverpool players' meeting after defeat to Man United

BY **CARL MARKHAM**

LIVERPOOL captain Virgil van Dijk insists Monday's players' meeting was not for "crisis" talks but he felt he had to deliver a message to the squad.

A run of four defeats prompted the unscheduled get-together and it had the desired effect as Arne Slot's side avoided equalling a 72-year record for losses with a comprehensive and confident 5-1 victory over Eintracht Frankfurt in the Champions League.

In truth Liverpool face much tougher opposition week in, week out in the Premier League – tomorrow's (3am malaysian time) trip to Brentford a prime example – but returning to winning ways at least helps ease the scrutiny.

"On Monday everyone was sad because we lost to Man United at home," said Van Dijk. "It was tough under the circumstances so on Monday we came together but it wasn't a crisis meeting.

"Nobody wants to lose four games in a row but it was the situation we faced. Obviously we also had a proper debrief with the manager but we also had a separate one as players.

"I wanted to say some things. It's not something I do after every game. After my meeting everyone was happy!"

Four successive defeats had brought understandable scrutiny, covering everything from Liverpool's defensive frailty to under-performance at set-pieces, with individual players like Mohamed Salah – a substitute in Germany whose mood was reflected with his march straight down the tunnel at the final whistle – and £100 million (RM580m) signing Florian Wirtz in the spotlight.

Wirtz at least responded positively with two assists for the fourth and fifth goals.

But there were also good displays from Hugo Ekitike, scoring on his return to his former club, Curtis Jones and Dominik Szoboszlai, their most consistent performer this season.

"We had to stay calm and block out all the noise from the outside because that's something you can't control," added Van Dijk.

"The only way to get out of a situation like that is to stay together, keep your mind on the task ahead, try to improve, keep the confidence, embrace the moment.

"They are all things that are easier to say than actually do but if you want to get out of it, you have to do it.

"We live in a world now where there is always noise – always something to be said, always someone who knows better.

"We have to stay focused on ourselves. We all know how things can change. We're only in October."

Liverpool's victory was marred by injuries to defender Jeremie Frimpong and Alexander Isak.

Netherlands international Frimpong was substituted in the first half with a hamstring problem, while Isak was removed at half-time with a groin strain. – The Independent

'Wirtz should not be judged on numbers alone'

BY **CARL MARKHAM**

LIVERPOOL defender Andy Robertson insists £100 million (RM503m) signing Florian Wirtz should not be judged on numbers alone.

The Germany international has come under scrutiny for not producing the form which made him Bundesliga player of the year at the age of 21 in Bayer Leverkusen's title-winning season of 2023-24 and one of Europe's hottest prospects.

He has had his struggles assimilating himself into Arne Slot's team but remains the Premier League leader in terms of chances created (29), open-play chances created (26) and expected assists (3.0).

Wirtz started to show flashes of a return to his best with two assists in the 5-1 Champions League victory over Eintracht Frankfurt on his first return to Germany since leaving in the summer.

"I thought he was outstanding, excellent. I thought he grew and grew into the game, especially the second half," said Robertson.

"Players around him helped him a lot – Curtis Jones was outstanding – and I thought the three midfielders helped us gain the momentum and keep the ball.

"Flo has been really good since he came here. People focus on numbers of goals and assists but at times it's unfair as he's created a hell of a lot of chances.

"Some of the chances he created (against Frankfurt) ended up in an assist. Hopefully he can take a lot from this performance."

Victory in Germany ended a run of four successive defeats and marked a significant departure for Slot, who opted to play two strikers in Alexander Isak and Hugo Ekitike, who scored the opening goal.

A groin problem for £125 million (RM704m) British-record signing Isak is likely to deny him that option at Brentford on Saturday.

"It changed it, obviously. We had more players centrally and I thought it worked really well, Alex and Hugo played really well first half and then Fed (Federico Chiesa) and Hugo linked up well in the second half," added Robertson.

"It's a different option for us and you always need different options, different formations, different people to come in to be able to play and we did that.

"The two of them fed off each other quite well and then it is about the boys working around them and I thought we did that really well."

Something else they improved on was set-pieces, a constant cause of irritation for Slot this season at both ends of the pitch.

Centrebacks Virgil van Dijk and Ibrahima Konate both scored from corners shortly before half-time to open up a two-goal cushion, while defensively they were not troubled by their hosts.

"The deliveries were spot on, the blocks were spot on and the runners were spot on and when you get the three things right you give yourself a hell of a chance to score and the two big lads put us 3-1 up at a crucial time and we went into cruise control after that and controlled the game." – The Independent



ERLING HAALAND has an ice bath in his back yard and a sauna in his garden as part of the fitness regime he has given himself to keep him available to carry on scoring.

The Manchester City forward, who has scored 22 goals in his last 12 games for club and country, has a lengthy recovery routine to ensure he stays fit.

Haaland also has home visits from a City physio before training and a private gym in his Manchester home.

The 25-year-old has launched his own *YouTube* channel (@erling) and was speaking on a documentary about a day in his life.

And he said that he tries to go in his personal ice bath and sauna every day. The striker bought both online as part of his attempts to prevent injury.

Haaland spent spells on the sidelines earlier in his career but has made 157 appearances in three-and-a-bit seasons since joining City, scoring 139 goals and winning two Premier League Golden Boots.

The former Borussia Dortmund player, who was filmed cooking outside on his barbecue on a day when a storm was forecast, signed a 9.5-year contract extension with City last season and said he did not mind the Mancunian weather because, coming from Norway, he was used to it being wilder.

Haaland also pays great attention to his diet, cooking a lot, and said he learned to be self-reliant after leaving home as a teenager.

"I have been living alone since I was 16 so I had to learn how to cook," he said. "Cooking is a big part of my life, especially steak and potatoes, I am from Norway." – The Independent

RESULTS

EUROPA LEAGUE: Sporting Braga 2 Red Star Belgrade 0, Brann 3 Rangers 0, FCSB 1 Bologna 2, Fenerbahce 1 Stuttgart 0, Go Ahead Eagles 2 Aston Villa 1, Genk 0 Real Betis 0, Lyon 2 Basel 0, Salzburg 2 Ferencvaros 3, Feyenoord 3 Panathinaikos 1, Roma 1 Viktoria Plzen 2, Celta Vigo 2 Nice 1, Celtic 2 Sturm Graz 1, Freiburg 2 Utrecht 0, Lille 3 PAOK 4, Maccabi Tel Aviv 0 Midtjylland 3, Malmo 1 Dinamo Zagreb 1, Nottingham Forest 2 Porto 0, Young Boys 3 Ludogorets 2.

CONFERENCE LEAGUE: Crystal Palace 0 AEK Larnaca 1, Shamrock Rovers 0 Celje 2, Mainz 1 Zrinjski 0, Lincoln Red Imps 2 Lech Poznan 1, Sigma Olomouc 1 Rakow 1, Samsunspor 3 Dynamo Kiyv 0, Craiova 1 Noah 1, Hamrun Spartans 0 Lausanne 1, AZ Alkmaar 1 Slovan Bratislava 0, Shakhtar Donetsk 1 Legia Warsaw 2, Rapid Vienna 0 Fiorentina 3, Strasbourg 1 Jagiellonia 1, AEK Athens 6 Aberdeen 0, Drita 1 Omonoia 1, Breidablik 0 Kups 0, Shkendija 1 Shelbourne 0, Hacken 2 Rayo Vallecano 2.

Tat Meng thanks Yeoh for support

FORMER national badminton coach, Wong Tat Meng expressed his thanks to Youth and Sports Minister Hannah Yeoh for her support as he continues his recovery from a motorcycle crash in Australia.

He posted on *Facebook* yesterday that he was touched by the concern shown by Yeoh and the National Sports Council (NSC).

"My most sincere thanks to YB Hannah Yeoh, Malaysia's Youth and Sports Minister and the NSC for the flowers and concerned words.

"I'm very touched to have received their support even as I'm undergoing rehabilitation in Australia. Your support inspires me to continue to remain strong and recover fully," he wrote.

Yeoh meanwhile said in a statement that her gesture was a sign of support and to mark his contributions to the country's sports field.

"I wanted coach Tat Meng to know he is not alone, not forgotten and that Malaysia remembers his contribution for sports and wants to see him back on his feet soon. A simple gift to lift his spirit," Yeoh said.

Tat Meng, 58, was involved in a motorcycle crash on Sept 7 along Putty Road, Garland Valley.

Besides the national badminton squad, Tat Meng also coached professional men's singles player, Lee Zii Jia, till he won the bronze medal at the 2024 Olympic Games in Paris before they parted ways last December. – Bernama

My recommendation: Tengku Muda Pahang

List containing seven heritage players given to FAM for detailed evaluation, says Sri Pahang FC owner

THE Tengku Muda of Pahang, Tengku Abdul Rahman Sultan Ahmad Shah, declared that he had recommended several names of heritage players to the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM), including the seven players currently under investigation by the International Football Federation (Fifa).

Tengku Abdul Rahman, who is the owner of Sri Pahang FC, stated that the suggestion was made with a sincere intention to help strengthen the national squad and to open up opportunities for Malaysian-blooded talents abroad to serve the country.

He said that since the end of 2024, several agents had contacted him to propose players for assessment before he forwarded the information to FAM for more detailed evaluation.

"Among the players I recommended to FAM are the seven heritage players who are now involved in the case of investigation and suspension by Fifa.

"For your information, all seven of these players are legitimate Malaysian citizens after being granted citizenship by the Government of Malaysia through a valid and orderly process in accordance with the provisions of the country's laws," he said in a statement to the media yesterday.

Tengku Abdul Rahman said he believes the presence of naturalised and heritage players can improve the quality of play and competitiveness of the national squad.

"I forwarded the suggestions to FAM for a more detailed evaluation to determine whether the players meet the criteria as heritage players and subsequently be considered to join the national squad," he said.

Tengku Abdul Rahman also shared the efforts undertaken with the Pahang team, which had previously been involved in the naturalisation process of players such as Mohamadou Sumareh, Sergio Aguero, and Lee Tuck, which he saw as a strategic step to strengthen the tactical capability of the national team.

Meanwhile, Tengku Abdul Rahman expressed appreciation for the vision and leadership of the Regent of Johor, Tunku Mahkota Ismail, which is credited with raising the quality of the Harimau Malaya squad including the extraordinary success of Johor Darul Ta'zim FC (JDT), which is now a benchmark for professionalism and modern management in the country's football landscape.

Last month, FAM and the seven naturalised players – Gabriel Felipe Arrocha, Facundo Garces, Rodrigo Holgado, Imanol Machuca, Joao Figueiredo, Jon Irazabal and Hector Hevel – were sanctioned by the Fifa Disciplinary Committee after being found to have violated Article 22 of the FIFA Disciplinary Code (FDC) related to document falsification.

In a previous statement, Fifa informed that FAM had submitted falsified documents to confirm the players' eligibility to play in the third round of the 2027 Asian Cup Qualifiers against Vietnam on June 10.

Following this, FAM was fined CHF 350,000 (approximately RM1.8 million), while each player was fined CHF 2,000 (around RM10,560) and suspended for 12 months from all football-related activities, effective from the date the decision notice was issued. – Bernama

Impressive outing for Hakim Danish

MALAYSIA'S young and talented rider, Muhammad Hakim Danish Ramli, says he never expected to deliver such an impressive performance in his debut appearance at the Moto3 World Championship during the 2025 Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix (MotoGP) at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) yesterday.

Speaking after the practice session, the Aeon Credit SIC Racing MSI rider said he was now determined to record his best lap time during today's qualifying session as he aims to start among the front pack for tomorrow's main race.

"For the first day, Alhamdulillah, I didn't expect to achieve such a result. Each lap, I stayed focused and kept pushing to be in the top position.

"For tomorrow's qualifying, I need to improve my lap time so it'll be easier to start in front during the race (on Sunday)… I'll go full gas tomorrow," he said.

Although he declined to reveal his specific target for the qualifying session, the 18-year-old rider said he would give his all to challenge the top contenders in Moto3.

Racing as a wildcard entry, Hakim Danish finished eighth overall out of 27 riders in Free Practice 1 with a lap time of 2 minutes 11.317 seconds, while Frinsa-MT Helmets-MSI rider Angel Piqueras topped the session with 2:10.979s.

The Terengganu-born racer later clocked 2:11.820s in the second practice session, behind Jose Antonio Rueda, who recorded the fastest time of 2:11.152s.

Meanwhile in MotoGP, even the downpour could stop BK8 Gresini Racing rider Fermin Aldeguer from topping the timesheets during Free Practice 1 (FP1).

The Spaniard clocked 2:00.199s to finish ahead of two-time world champion and Ducati Lenovo Team rider Francesco Bagnaia, who trailed by +0.256s, while Honda HRC Castrol's Joan Mir (+0.349s) was third fastest.

In Moto2, British rider Jake Dixon of the Elf Marc VDS Racing Team made a flying start to his campaign here by posting the fastest time of 2:04.131s.

Albert Arenas of Gresini Moto2 was second in 2:04.292s, followed by David Alonso of CFMOTO RCB Aspar Team (2:04.429s) in third place.

However, it was a session to forget for Malaysian wildcard riders Azroy Hakeem Anuar and Muhammad Helmi Azman, both of Petronas MIE Racing RW, who finished at the bottom of the standings.

Azroy Hakeem was 29th in 2:08.023s and Helmi last in 2:08.933s. – Bernama



Hakim Danish

SHORTS

Silat camp optimistic

THE national pencak silat camp is determined to repeat its excellent achievement of two years ago by winning four gold medals when they compete at the 2025 SEA Games in Thailand this December.

Malaysian National Silat Federation (Pesaka), Secretary-general Bibi Aishah Golbal Shah, said that although some categories that were previous gold mines are not contested in this edition, she is confident the target can be achieved.

"So far, the Malaysian team under my supervision has not failed in terms of medal collection. Usually, what we target, we meet and even exceed. In the last SEA Games in Cambodia, where our target was only three gold medals, we managed to get four gold medals there.

"So, we hope that will happen again in Songkhla (SEA Games Thailand)," she said when met by the media after Deputy Chief-de-Mission (CDM) Nazmizan Mohamad's visit to the national silat squad training centre in Nilai on Thursday.

When asked about the national silat squad's preparation ahead of the biennial games, she said everything was progressing as planned.

In fact, she said the national squad were in their best performance, having successfully brought home three gold medals from the 2025 Southeast Asian Silat Championship in Hatyai, Thailand, recently.

"I am confident that the national silat exponents can maintain this excellent performance at the upcoming SEA Games. We will hold our final centralised training camp in Cameron Highlands for two weeks to improve certain weaknesses before heading to the games in December," she said.

Hoe Yean, Ariana clinch top awards

NATIONAL swimmer Khiew Hoe Yean and archer Ariana Nur Dania Mohamad Zairi were crowned Federal Territories Sportsman and Sportswoman for the 2023/24 edition at the Federal Territories Sports Awards Ceremony.

The two athletes each received a challenge trophy, RM8,000 cash and a certificate of appreciation presented by the Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa.

Hoe Yean, 23, who qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympic Games, beat competition from archer Alang Ariff Aqil Muhammad Ghazali and diver Nurqayyum Nazmi Mohamad Nazim to win the prestigious award.

Meanwhile, Ariana, 20, who hails from Kuala Lumpur, successfully defeated her rivals, lawn bowling athlete Nur Ain Nabilah Tarmizi and wushu athlete Kwan Yong Xin in the Federal Territories Sportswoman category.

The country's recurve athlete qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics in the individual and team events after success at the Asian Continental Qualifier Championship in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2023 as well as at the ArcheryInParis Final Olympic Qualifier 2024.

Red Giant go down again

SELANGOR FC are still looking for their first win of the season in the 2025/26 Asian Football Confederation Champions League 2 (ACL2) tournament after losing to Persib Bandung 2-0 on Thursday.

This was also the third consecutive defeat for the Red Giants in ACL2 this season.

In the action held at Gelora Bandung Lautan Api Stadium, West Java, the hosts started by making several unsuccessful attempts to penetrate Selangor's defence.

However, in the 29th minute, Persib Bandung netted their first goal via Adam Alis who scored from a pass from Marc Klok.

Selangor almost managed to equalise in the 41st minute but Chrigor Moraes' shot was saved by Teja Paku Alam. Selangor again came close to breaking the deadlock in the 51st minute but Alvin Fortes' shot hit the crossbar.

In the 66th minute, Selangor defender Harith Haiqal Adam Afkar in his haste committed a foul on an opposing player in the penalty box, which saw the referee award a penalty which was converted by Andrew Jung.

The result saw Selangor at the bottom of Group G with no points after three matches.

SCAN ME

theSun Sports

SATURDAY | OCT 25, 2025

Read theSun Malaysian Paper iPaper at
www.thesun.my
Free access to iPaper PDF Download
or download theSun app from the App Store or Google Play™.
Download on the App Store · GET IT ON Google Play · EXPLORE IT ON AppGallery
SCAN ME

Litmus test

Isak-less Liverpool look to hit stride as City, United face formidable foes

LIVERPOOL must halt their three-game Premier League losing streak with tomorrow's visit to Brentford to remain in touch with Arsenal and in-form Manchester City.

The loss of the Premier League's most expensive player in Alexander Isak to a groin injury could actually help Arne Slot stumble upon the right formula to turnaround Liverpool's fortunes.

The Sweden attacker's only goal since his £125 million (RM725m) move from Newcastle came against second tier Southampton in the Carabao Cup as a lack of pre-season conditioning has hampered his start to life at Anfield.

Isak was replaced at half-time during Thursday's 5-1 Champions League win at Eintracht Frankfurt as the Reds ended a run of four consecutive defeats.

With Hugo Ekitike restored as the centre forward and Florian Wirtz able to operate in his preferred role behind the striker, Liverpool suddenly clicked into gear in the second half.

Wirtz, who has been dropped for the last two Premier League games, registered his first two assists since a £100 million (RM580m) move from Bayer Leverkusen.

Despite Ekitike's impressive start, that includes five goals in 11 Liverpool appearances, the Frenchman has not started in any of his side's three Premier League defeats to Crystal Palace, Chelsea and United.

Isak's absence should give the 23-year-old the run in the side he craved.

Manchester City begin the weekend in second, three points off the top, and showing signs they will brush off the malaise that caused an unceremonious fall from grace last season.

However, their nine-game unbeaten run will be tested by trip to Aston Villa, while leaders Arsenal welcome Crystal Palace to the Emirates.

Pep Guardiola's men finished a distant third behind Liverpool and Arsenal in their first trophyless season for eight years.

Early defeats to Tottenham and Brighton suggested more of the same for Guardiola's new-look squad.

But the signing of giant Italian goalkeeper Gianluigi Donnarumma and the unstoppable form of Erling Haaland have dragged City back into title contention once more.

"I have the feeling things are coming back to what we were in the past," said Guardiola after Wednesday's 2-0 Champions League win at Villarreal.

"Last season was tough for us, the vibe and how the team are playing now make me feel fine."

A trip to Villa Park, where City have lost for the past two seasons, is a litmus test of their credentials as title contenders.

After a slow start, Villa have won three consecutive Premier League games.

Haaland's 12-game scoring streak for club and country has masked the fact that no other City player has scored in the Premier League for nearly a month.

Manchester United are aiming to build on their long-awaited victory at Anfield last weekend but face a Brighton side that have grown used to winning at Old Trafford in recent seasons.

"We will see after Brighton," said Ruben Amorim on whether United have turned a corner in the immediate aftermath of the Red Devils first win at Liverpool for nearly a decade.

The most significant win of Amorim's tenure was also the first time the Portuguese has won back-to-back League games, nearly a year into the role.

After Brighton cruised to a 3-1 win at Old Trafford in January, Amorim made headlines by claiming his squad was possibly the worst in the club's history.

But that was just one of three consecutive victories at the Theatre of Dreams for the Seagulls, since they won there for the first time ever in 2022.

In total, Brighton have won six of the last seven Premier League meetings between the sides.

Victory for United would lift them into the top four for a few hours at least and provide tangible evidence finally of some progress under Amorim. – AFP



Liverpool forward Alexander Isak. – *REUTERSPIC*

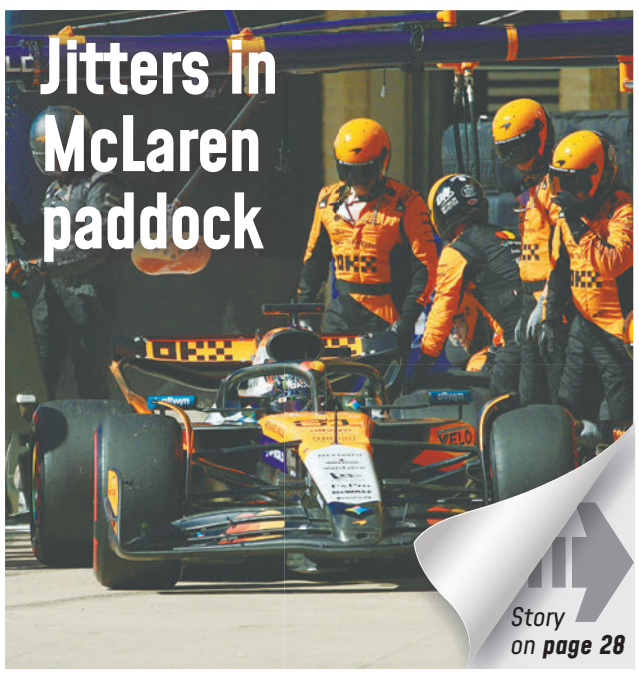
PREMIER LEAGUE FIXTURES

All matches at 10pm Malaysian time unless stated.

TODAY
Newcastle *vs* **Fulham**
Chelsea *vs* **Sunderland**

TOMORROW
Man Utd *vs* **Brighton** *(12.30am)*
Brentford *vs* **Liverpool** *(3am)*
Wolves *vs* **Burnley**
Bournemouth *vs* **Nottm Forest**
Arsenal *vs* **Crystal Palace**
Aston Villa *vs* **Man City**

MONDAY *(12.30am)*
Everton *vs* **Tottenham**







theSun is published and printed by Sun Media Corporation Sdn Bhd (221220-K) of Lot 6, Jalan 51/217, 46050 Petaling Jaya, Selangor. Tel: 03-7784 6688 • Tel (Editorial): 03-7784 6688 Fax: 03-7785 2625 Email: newsdesk@thesundaily.com • Tel (Advertising): 03-7784 8888 Email: advertise@thesundaily.com