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The gathering is the biggest Asean Summit in terms of attendance of foreign leaders, showing respect not only for Malaysia's chairmanship but also for the growing relevance of the bloc as a regional and global force. – *BERNAMAPIC*



Mammoth task ahead

Minefield of diplomatic sensitivities, regional rifts and geopolitical rivalries requires host Malaysia to navigate summit diplomatically to achieve desired outcomes without impact to integrity of Asean.

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Stagnant organ transplant situation driving desperate patients overseas for life-saving surgery.

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Group warns of cyber trooping impact from coordinated online propaganda using fake social media accounts.

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Timor-Leste becomes 11th member of Asean

Country deposits instruments of accession to Asean Charter and Treaty on Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, confirming full membership in bloc

BY **HARITH KAMAL**
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KUALA LUMPUR: Timor-Leste yesterday crossed a historic threshold as it became Asean's 11th member, sealing its place in the regional family after decades of struggle, state-building and steadfast pursuit of belonging.

At a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan announced that Timor-Leste had officially deposited its instruments of accession to the Asean Charter and the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone, confirming its full membership in the regional grouping.

"This effectively marks Timor-Leste's full admission as the eleventh member of Asean and the expansion of Asean's scope to include every sovereign state in this home we share," said Mohamad.

He also congratulated the government and people of Timor-Leste on behalf of Malaysia and other Asean member states, describing it as a "nation built on courage, perseverance and unyielding hope".

"Today, we celebrate you as you join a family that has long awaited your full inclusion. Welcome to the Asean family and to our venerated charter."

He described the Asean Charter as "the heartbeat of our shared vision", a covenant of trust, respect and solidarity that binds the region's diverse nations in their pursuit of peace and prosperity.

Mohamad said Timor-Leste had demonstrated its faith in Asean's ideals and its commitment to keeping Southeast Asia a sanctuary of peace, free from the threat of nuclear weapons by acceding to both the charter and the treaty.

"These accessions reflect more than institutional formality.

"They represent Timor-Leste's strong faith in Asean's ideals and a profound belief in our collective future, one built on harmony, cooperation and mutual respect."

He added that Timor-Leste's journey to Asean membership had been long and arduous, from its hard-fought independence to years of nation-building and gradual engagement with Asean mechanisms.

"The story of Timor-Leste is one of remarkable tenacity."

He also said its full membership brings new energy, fresh perspectives and a youthful population eager to contribute.

Mohamad stressed that Asean's strength lies in its diversity, and the ability to turn that diversity into shared purpose, expressing confidence that Timor-Leste's inclusion would further strengthen regional cohesion.

"Today, we are not just welcoming a new member. We are reaffirming our belief in an Asean that is inclusive, resilient and future-ready – one community, united in peace, committed to progress and grounded in the unbreakable bonds of kinship."

Timor-Leste's admission marks Asean's first enlargement in more than two decades.

It gained independence in 2002, applied for membership in 2011 and was granted observer status in 2022.

Malaysia, Brazil committed to boosting bilateral relations

PUTRAJAYA: Malaysia and Brazil are determined to enhance bilateral relations across various sectors, including in trade and investment, energy and human development, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

He said both countries are also committed to strengthening cooperation in the fields of semiconductors, food technology, education and culture.

"We have some expertise (in the semiconductor sector) to share with you, while in food technology, you have better expertise.

"We also discussed the possibility of increased import of poultry products from Brazil," Anwar said at a joint media conference with Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva after a bilateral meeting at Seri Perdana yesterday.

He said Malaysia and Brazil could also serve as key partners in fostering deeper collaboration between Asean and the South American region.

"Let us ensure that our two countries and two regions, Latin America and Asean, work together to become one of the key pillars in ensuring that our relations extend beyond trade investments, politics and culture."

Anwar also commended Lula's stance on the atrocities committed against Palestinians and the genocide in Gaza.

He described the Brazilian president as one of the few world leaders who have shown exceptional courage in speaking out against the atrocities.

Anwar congratulated Lula on being conferred an Honorary Doctorate from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia at a special convocation ceremony yesterday in recognition of his leadership and contributions to advancing the Global South.

Lula said governance should not be about power but about service to the people.

"When we govern a country, I don't like to use the word 'govern'. I prefer the term 'take care', because our mission is to serve those we represent.

"To truly take care of the people means focusing on those who are most in need. These are the individuals who genuinely require the government's role and support."



Anwar and Lula at the joint media conference at Seri Perdana Complex yesterday. – *BERNAMAPIC*

Speaking on global conflicts, he condemned the United Nations (UN) Security Council for its inability to effectively address and prevent ongoing crises, particularly the war in Ukraine and the humanitarian situation in Gaza.

"Today, the UN Security Council and the UN itself no longer work. If we do not establish a new world system that can say 'this cannot happen', these things will continue to occur."

Lula's visit marks his first to Malaysia since assuming office for a new term in January 2023. – Bernama

US president to attend summit

KUALA LUMPUR: United States (US) President Donald Trump will arrive for an official visit to Malaysia from today until tomorrow in conjunction with the 13th Asean-United States Summit and 20th East Asia Summit, at the invitation of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim as chairman of Asean.

The Foreign Ministry said in a statement yesterday that this marks Trump's first visit to the Southeast Asian region since taking office as the 47th President of the US in January.

During the visit, Anwar and Trump are scheduled to have a bilateral meeting.

"Both leaders will discuss efforts to strengthen cooperation in the areas of trade and investment, defence and security as well as people-to-people relations, in line with the Malaysia-United States Comprehensive Partnership."

The ministry also said both leaders are expected to exchange views on regional and international developments of mutual concern as well as sign documents on trade and security.

"This visit is anticipated to further strengthen relations between Malaysia and the US, paving the way for a new chapter towards even more strategic bilateral ties."

It added that bilateral relations between Malaysia and the US have remained strong since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1957.

The US is among Malaysia's largest trading partners and investors, with total trade valued at RM324.91 billion in 2024. – Bernama

Thai premier postpones visit to KL following demise of queen mother

BY **THE SUN TEAM**
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KUALA LUMPUR: Thai Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul has postponed his official visit to Malaysia following the death of the kingdom's queen mother Queen Sirikit on Friday.

Anutin, who also serves as interior minister, said he had been scheduled to travel to Malaysia yesterday but decided to delay the trip due to the national mourning period.

He is expected to visit Malaysia today to sign a ceasefire agreement with Cambodia before returning to Thailand, without attending the Asean Summit.

Anutin reportedly requested that the ceasefire agreement signing ceremony be held on Sunday morning to facilitate his return to Thailand.

He said he would also miss the Apec Summit in South Korea next week.

Asean foreign ministers met yesterday in Kuala Lumpur to begin a weekend of high-level diplomacy ahead of the summit.

US President Donald Trump is scheduled to arrive this morning for the first leg of his Asia tour, during which he and Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim are expected to witness the signing of the ceasefire agreement between Cambodia and Thailand – a deal he helped broker following a deadly five-day border clash in July.

The fighting, described as the fiercest between the two Southeast Asian neighbours in decades, left dozens dead and displaced about 300,000 people.

World leaders, including Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, South African President Cyril Ramaphosa and Japan's newly elected Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi, are expected to join Trump at the summit today.

Trump is also expected to hold a highly anticipated meeting with Lula on the sidelines of the summit.

Gaza peace effort step towards protecting rights

BY **HARITH KAMAL**
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PETALING JAYA: Asean has welcomed early efforts to establish a cessation of violence in Gaza, describing it as a crucial step towards upholding international law and protecting human dignity.

Speaking at the Asean Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Mohamad Hasan said the bloc remains deeply concerned over global conflicts and their potential impact on regional stability.

"The world has borne witness to the suffering endured by the Palestinians in Gaza, marked by devastating loss of life, mass displacement and the systematic erosion of hope and dignity," he said.

He added that Asean views the first phase of United States President Donald Trump's comprehensive plan to end the Gaza conflict as "an important step towards realising the Palestinian people's right to self-determination and the establishment of a sovereign and independent state."

Mohamad stressed that while Asean continues to manage challenges within the region, it must not turn a blind eye to crises beyond its borders.

He also urged member states to remain guided by the Asean way, built on diplomacy, trust and consensus, as the grouping navigates growing geopolitical uncertainty.

"The border conflict between our neighbours this year has reminded us of the fragility of peace," he said.

"Fortunately, thanks to tireless mediation efforts, tensions have since de-escalated. We commend both countries (Thailand and Cambodia) for choosing the path of diplomacy and dialogue to resolve their differences."

On Myanmar, Mohamad described reconciliation as a "long process" that must be led by the people of Myanmar and supported by Asean, a path grounded in trust, not coercion.

He cautioned that if the crisis remains unresolved, it could spill across borders in the form of "transnational crime, refugee flows and wider socioeconomic instability".

Citing Asean's swift humanitarian response to the deadly earthquake that struck Myanmar earlier this year, Mohamad said Malaysia remains committed to supporting recovery and peacebuilding efforts.

He also reaffirmed that despite global turbulence, Asean must remain firm, united and guided by the Asean way, with its diversity continuing to be "the region's greatest source of strength".

Diplomatic sensitivities risk to unity agenda

BY **HARITH KAMAL**
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As host, Malaysia must tread carefully when managing clashing interests without allowing major powers to divide regional bloc, says expert

PETALING JAYA: As Malaysia hosts one of the most consequential Asean Summits in years today, experts warn that Putrajaya must tread carefully through a minefield of diplomatic sensitivities, regional rifts and geopolitical rivalries that could either strengthen or strain the bloc's unity.

With an unprecedented number of world leaders – including United States President Donald Trump – in attendance, the meeting is set to test Asean's ability to hold together amid clashing interests over flashpoints such as the Myanmar crisis, South China Sea and the Israel-Palestine conflict.

Nusantara Academy of Strategic Research senior fellow Prof Dr Azmi Hassan said Malaysia faces both an opportunity and a challenge in managing expectations as host and chair, especially given the summit's scale and scrutiny.

"This is the biggest Asean Summit in terms of foreign leaders' attendance. It shows respect not only for Malaysia's chairmanship but also for Asean's growing relevance as a regional and global player," he said.

However, Azmi cautioned that the presence of powerful figures such as Trump could risk turning the spotlight away from Asean's collective agenda.

"We know Trump tends to seek the limelight, but Malaysia could use his influence constructively.

"The real focus should be on advancing regional peace – from Gaza and possibly even Ukraine to the South China Sea – without allowing major powers to divide Asean," he said.

He added that Malaysia's credibility as a "non-biased player" would be critical in sensitive discussions, citing its past mediation roles in southern Thailand and the Bangsamoro peace process.

"A successful summit won't necessarily hinge on declarations but on productive side meetings and quiet diplomacy.

"The real progress happens in informal talks – those side discussions on Gaza or the South China Sea.

"That's where Malaysia can demonstrate leadership," Azmi said.

International Islamic University Malaysia international relations expert Assoc Prof Dr Mohd Yazid Zul Kepli said Malaysia's leadership would also be tested by divisions that continue to plague the bloc.

"Asean's biggest fault lines remain Myanmar and the South China Sea. Some members push for tougher action while others cling to the non-interference principle.

Mohd Yazid said another overlooked source of tension lies in transnational crimes such as cross-border cyber scams and human trafficking networks operating in parts of Myanmar, Cambodia and Laos.

"These are transnational crimes that hurt Asean's credibility. Some governments prefer not to highlight them, but silence risks undermining regional trust," he said.

He added that Malaysia must also be "extra ready" in managing Trump's unpredictable presence.

"Trump is emotional and likes to draw attention. Malaysia must be tactful to ensure his presence does not derail discussions or create unnecessary friction. Diplomatic protocol, tone and sequencing will matter greatly," he said.

On the global stage, Mohd Yazid said Malaysia must tread carefully on emotionally charged issues such as Palestine.

"Malaysia must avoid even the perception of bias – whether in statements, seating or bilateral dealings.

"One careless gesture can undo months of diplomacy," he said.

Both analysts said the summit's success will not be measured in headlines or handshakes but in how well Malaysia keeps diplomacy quiet, careful and credible.

No gatherings allowed at Ampang Park: Police

KUALA LUMPUR: Police have prohibited any gatherings at Ampang Park along Jalan Ampang due to security reasons and to safeguard the country's image during the 47th Asean Summit.

Kuala Lumpur police chief Datuk Fadil Marsus said the area has been assessed as unsuitable for assemblies based on intelligence findings and security analyses conducted with other agencies.

"Ampang Park has been classified as a red zone as it lies less than 50m from the protocol route and official accommodation for Asean Summit delegates.

"For security reasons, and to preserve Malaysia's image and ensure the smooth conduct of the international event, police will not permit any gatherings in the area," he said at the Kuala Lumpur police contingent headquarters yesterday.

Police have received information about up to three gatherings planned for today at Ampang Park, that are expected to draw between 1,000 and 1,500 participants from 9am to 11.30am.

It is learnt that the gatherings are being organised by a coalition of pro-Palestinian groups to protest against the presence of United States President Donald Trump in conjunction with the summit.

Fadil said police have met the organisers and proposed alternative venues such as Dataran Merdeka and Padang Merbok, but the organisers remained intent on proceeding with the gathering at Ampang Park.

"If the gatherings proceed, they will be considered a breach of security directives and firm action will be taken in accordance with the law.

"Police will order participants to disperse and maintain control to prevent any provocation," he said.

He added that while police respect the public's right to assemble, all parties must comply with laws and safety instructions.

Fadil also urged the public to cooperate with authorities and plan their movements in advance to avoid traffic congestion or disruption. – Bernama



Fadli announcing the closure of roads at the press conference. – *BERNAMAPIC*



Ministry to continue breast cancer screening initiative

PUTRAJAYA: The Health Ministry is targeting at least 20,000 women to undergo breast cancer screening between October and December this year.

In a statement yesterday, the ministry said the target aligns with its commitment to expand screening networks and coverage, and to boost early detection for timely and effective treatment.

"Although Pink October has come to an end, the ministry will continue activities under the Post-Pink October initiative to ensure that awareness campaigns and breast cancer screening programmes are carried out throughout the year.

"It is the ministry's commitment to strengthen screening access, improve treatment and ensure that every woman in Malaysia has the opportunity to be diagnosed and treated early," it said.

The statement was issued in conjunction with the Pink Ribbon Run at Dataran Wawasan in Putrajaya, which was attended by Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

Tengku Permaisuri Selangor Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin graced the event, which symbolised solidarity and served as the official closing ceremony for the Breast Cancer Awareness Month campaign held nationwide throughout October.

According to the ministry, this year's programme carried the theme "United for Women: Spread Awareness, Save Lives", reflecting the spirit of unity among all Malaysians in protecting women from the threat of breast cancer.

In the same statement, Dzulkefly stressed that breast cancer remains the most common form of cancer in Malaysia, with 50.5% of cases still detected at stages three and four.

"This shows the need and importance of continuous efforts to raise awareness and promote early screening for this disease," he said.

The Pink Ribbon Run brought together 900 participants from diverse backgrounds as a symbol of solidarity in the fight against breast cancer. – Bernama



Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin (centre) posing for a photo with local artistes at the event. – *PIC COURTESY OF LINDA RAFAR FACEBOOK PAGE*

Doctors urge overhaul of organ transplant system

Medical fraternity says decades of slow progress, lack of national oversight threaten lives and hinder efforts to meet standards

BY **FAIZ RUZMAN**
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PETALING JAYA: The medical fraternity has sounded the alarm over the country's stagnant organ transplant situation, adding that persistent gaps in policy, manpower and governance are driving patients abroad for life-saving surgeries.

Malaysian Society of Transplantation (MST) president Dr Mohamad Zaimi Abdul Wahab said despite nearly five decades of transplant history, Malaysia continues to struggle to meet domestic demand, particularly for complex procedures such as paediatric liver transplants.

"Our transplant ecosystem as a whole is still not conducive for the growth of transplantation in Malaysia.

"Malaysia was one of the earliest nations in Southeast Asia to perform kidney transplants, dating back to 1975. Yet our progress has stagnated," he told *theSun* in a phone interview.

Between 1997 and 2025, Malaysia recorded only 161 liver transplants, far behind South Korea, which performed 310 in 2022 alone.

"That's bad. For kidney patients, there's dialysis. But for liver patients, if they don't get a new organ, they die," he said.

Zaimi added that under the 2008 Declaration of Istanbul – an international ethical framework against organ trafficking, which Malaysia has ratified – countries are expected to achieve "self-sufficiency" or the ability to meet transplant needs locally without sending patients overseas.

"The fact that Malaysians still travel abroad shows we haven't achieved that goal," he said.

He added that paediatric liver transplants remain among the most challenging due to limited expertise.

"Before Covid-19, paediatric liver cases were referred to China. Now, Hospital Tunku Azizah in Kuala Lumpur can perform them but there are still limitations on the complexity of cases they can handle.

"Malaysia has capable surgeons, but not enough dedicated full-time transplant specialists. When someone handles only two or three cases a month, it's impossible to build consistent proficiency."

Zaimi also criticised the absence of a national authority to coordinate transplant policy and capacity-building efforts.

"Unlike nephrology, which has a national head of service, there is no dedicated body overseeing transplantation in Malaysia.

"The National Transplant Resource Centre (NTRC) only promotes awareness and coordinates deceased-donor programmes.

"It's even parked under Hospital Kuala Lumpur, not directly under the Health Ministry. A national-level body should never be placed under a hospital."

He said for years, MST has proposed that NTRC be empowered as a full-fledged coordinating authority overseeing resource planning, governance and standards.

"There has been some movement, but it's slow. We hope the ministry would move in that direction so there is one body with real authority to plan and ensure accountability nationwide."

Meanwhile, experts from the Universiti Teknologi Mara Faculty of Medicine said the problem extends beyond logistics and infrastructure, involving ethics, trust and governance.

"From a bioethical view, organ transplants done overseas raise questions about consent, fairness and exploitation.

"Without stringent oversight, there is a risk that ethical and legal standards might be overlooked, including the potential for trafficking or the use of substandard organs.

"Saving a life must never come at the cost of human dignity or justice," said associate professor Dr Aimi Nadia Mohd Yusof and Dr Muhamad Zaid Muuti in a joint statement.

The duo urged Malaysia to adopt transparent donor systems, enhance public awareness and invest in specialist training.

"Malaysia must first address the problem of low organ donation rates. At present, Malaysia uses an opt-in system, meaning people must sign up to become donors.

"By introducing a transparent, well-managed opt-out system, supported by education and public awareness, Malaysia can increase the number of available organs and reduce the need for patients to go overseas. This can cut long-term treatment costs, such as dialysis.

"Most importantly, people would still have the right to opt out if they are not comfortable donating. This change could make the system fairer, ethical and trustworthy."

Increase in medical crowdfunding cases

PETALING JAYA: Medical crowdfunding in Malaysia has surged by more than 50% between 2019 and 2022, as more families turn to public donations to pay for critical healthcare, according to local platform Kitafund.

Its director Adiba Nur'ain Shaharuddin said the number of medical-related campaigns has spiked since the pandemic, with growing appeals to help treat cancer, organ-related conditions and long-term neurological diseases.

"We've seen more families turning to crowdfunding not because they want to but because they have no other option.

"Most are from low and middle income households that have already exhausted other financial aid avenues," she told *theSun*.

Adiba said Kitafund has handled several organ transplant related cases, particularly infant liver transplants, but added that most of such operations are fully funded by the government through public hospitals.

"Most are covered entirely by government hospitals. The donations we collect are usually meant to cover follow-up treatments, long-term medications and support equipment used during or after surgery."

She said cases requiring overseas treatment remain rare as most patients receive care domestically within the public healthcare system.

"While the majority of campaigns remain domestic, only one or two cases each year involve treatment overseas as Kitafund's direct-payment policy requires hospitals to receive funds directly from the platform, a process not always accepted by foreign institutions."

Adiba said most medical crowdfunding funds go towards follow-up care, rehabilitation and long-term medication, especially for children and post-surgery patients.

"We are also seeing more campaigns involving young children, a worrying sign of deteriorating community health," she added.

She said the collective empathy of Malaysians remains strong, with most donors contributing between RM10 and RM50 per campaign.

However, not all campaigns succeed as visibility and reach often determine outcomes.

"Crowdfunding has become a symbol of solidarity. But it also reminds us how fragile access to healthcare can be when survival depends on public generosity."

On Oct 17, *theSun* reported on 16-year-old Meera Bernadette, a liver cancer patient, whose story moved Malaysians nationwide after her family sought RM300,000 for a life-saving liver transplant in India.

Within just five days, her family reached their fundraising goal, enabling Meera to undergo the procedure at Indraprastha Apollo Hospital in New Delhi on Nov 12.

The campaign also drew support from Hamidi's Comrades in Charity (HCIC), a volunteer group that helped share Meera's story and mobilise contributions.

HCIC secretary Hamidi Mookkaiyah Abdullah said the group collected about RM12,000, while most donations were channelled directly to an account belonging to Meera's mother.

"We thank everyone who contributed, including *theSun*, for helping raise awareness," said Hamidi.

"This shows how much good can be achieved when people come together and that is something truly worth celebrating." – *by* ***Faiz Ruzman***

'Datuk' among eight held over brawl

JERTIH: A businessman with the title of "Datuk" was among eight people detained by police to assist in investigations into a fight on Friday that was widely circulated on social media.

Besut police chief Supt Azamuddin Ahmad said all the men, aged between 21 and 40, were arrested when they turned up to have their statements recorded at the Besut police headquarters.

He said a 36-year-old man who lodged a police report on the incident was also detained to assist in the investigation.

"We received a report at 1.32am on the incident, which is believed to have occurred at about 11pm in front of a house in Jertih.

"Based on the report received, the man claimed he was assaulted by a group of individuals while carrying out live streaming using his mobile phone in front of the house of one of those arrested.

"During the incident, the man was said to have gone to the house to clear up a misunderstanding.

"As soon as he reached the front of the house, he refused to enter the house as requested by the homeowner, resulting in an argument and commotion."

Azamuddin said several others came out of the house and a scuffle ensued, resulting in the mobile phone used in the live stream being snatched away.

"The man sustained injuries, including bruises on the back of the head, right and left elbows, left finger and the back of his body due to struggling and falling," he said, adding that the his vehicle was also allegedly damaged.

Azamuddin said all the men were taken to a Kuala Terengganu court yesterday for a remand application, and the case is being investigated under sections 147 and 427 of the Penal Code for rioting and mischief.

He urged those with information on the case to contact the investigation officer Insp Mohamad Effie Ezral Mohd Izham at 09-6956 222 (ext 5913). – Bernama

Call to ban cyber trooping

BY **QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI**
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Coordinated online propaganda using fake social media accounts has evolved into monetised industry of deception, eroding democracy and destroying trust in institutions: NGO

PETALING JAYA: Coordinated online propaganda using fake social media accounts, known as cyber trooping, has become a weapon of manipulation in Malaysia's digital landscape, and should be banned outright, the Malaysia Cyber Consumer Association warned.

Its president Sirajuddin Jalil said such operations, which have evolved into a "monetised industry of deception", are eroding democracy, poisoning public debate and destroying trust in institutions.

"Disinformation is not random, it's a business," he told *theSun*.

"Individuals and organisations are paid to deliver agenda-setting outcomes for their clients, whether they are government agencies, political parties, private contractors or influencers."

Sirajuddin was responding to a report by a news portal several weeks ago that indicated a network of at least 263 Facebook accounts allegedly running a coordinated political support campaign.

The report detailed the use of astroturfing, a tactic that manufactures fake grassroots movements to simulate public support, which he said clearly fits the pattern of coordinated inauthentic behaviour.

"I strongly oppose any form of cyber trooping. It distorts public discussion, manipulates opinion and ultimately kills democracy.

"Such actions are unethical and violate the spirit of free expression."

Sirajuddin said the practice breaches the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998, which prohibits false or misleading content, and must be treated as a criminal offence.

He warned that Malaysia's weak enforcement regime and the rampant sale of pre-registered or fake SIM cards have fuelled the growth of these shadow networks.

"These SIM cards are openly sold on e-commerce platforms. They enable cybercriminals, scammers and troopers to hide their identities while spreading false narratives.

"Yet, the telecommunications industry has been far too lenient in enforcing compliance."

He urged regulators to adopt strict verification standards similar to those in the banking sector under Bank Negara Malaysia guidelines.

Sirajuddin also said cyber trooping transcends political boundaries, adding that political actors as well as private organisations have used such tactics for gain.

"Cyber trooping is not a government issue, it's a national issue.

"It's used to shape public sentiment. Whoever pays benefits. Everyone sins equally in this ecosystem."

He called for stronger regulatory reform, including digital identity verification for all social media users to curb anonymity and enhance accountability.

"Indonesia has already proposed national verification measures to ensure every social media account is tied to a verified identity.

"Malaysia should explore similar digital ID integration for online platforms."

Sirajuddin cautioned that no party should rely on manipulation as a communication strategy.

"If they want to convey their message, it should do so transparently.

"Paid troopers may create short-term wins but in the long run, they destroy public trust, fuel toxicity and undermine democracy."

He stressed that strategic communication must not be confused with deception.

"Agenda-setting is legitimate when done transparently but cyber trooping crosses the ethical line."



Residents in the Kulim district walking past a flood-hit house on the way to a relief centre. – *BERNAMAPIC*

Residents urged to evacuate flood-hit homes

KULIM: Residents in flood-hit areas in the district have been advised to immediately move to temporary relief centres following reports that some are still refusing to relocate despite their homes being inundated.

Kulim district officer Mohamad Rizal Mohamad Radzi said their refusal to leave their flooded homes is dangerous, especially during uncertain weather conditions, in addition to the risk of running out of food supplies.

He was speaking at the Sekolah Menengah Agama Madrasah Ihsaniah temporary relief centre in Kampung Jangkang, Karangan yesterday.

Mohamad Rizal also said food and beverages are provided to evacuees four times a day.

He added that officers from various agencies are also present at the relief centres to assist in channelling aid to them. – Bernama

Three Nepalese remanded in double murder case

BUKIT MERTAJAM: Three Nepalese men arrested in connection with the murders of a woman and her daughter in Kampung Sekolah Juru have been remanded for seven days.

Penang police chief Datuk Azizee Ismail said the remand order until Oct 31 was granted by the Bukit Mertajam Magistrate's Court to assist in investigations under Section 302 of the Penal Code.

Azizee said police arrested three men in their 30s and 40s on Friday, including one believed to be the main suspect.

It is understood that the main suspect was attempting to flee abroad and was detained at the immigration office while the other two were arrested at a residence in Bukit Tengah.

It was reported last Saturday that Sariya Che Hin, 51, and her adopted daughter Nur Afrina Alisha Abdul Rahim, 11, were found dead in a house in Kampung Sekolah Juru.

Following the incident, police arrested three suspects, including the victim's 57-year-old husband to assist in investigations. – Bernama

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'Giants' of Perak River facing quiet extinction

Once abundant, prized striped carp now teeters on brink as invasive fish and habitat loss threaten survival of species



Shahrul showing a *temoleh* caught from the Perak River. – *BERNAMAPIC*

PARIT: Once a familiar sight in the murky depths of the Perak River, the *temoleh* (striped carp), a majestic freshwater giant revered by anglers and fish enthusiasts, is quietly slipping towards extinction.

For generations, the waters of Central Perak teemed with the native wild carp, prized for its size and tender flesh. Today, sightings are rare and the few that are caught are noticeably smaller, a worrying sign for fishermen and conservationists alike.

Also found in the Pahang River, the *temoleh*, or *temelian*, once dominated local catches, often weighing between 20kg and 40kg.

Its decline has left many wondering whether the species could survive the mounting pressures on its habitat.

Along the riverbanks, fishermen recount when the fish would rise in great numbers near feeding grounds.

Now, a good catch is considered a grand stroke of luck, a faint echo of an abundant past.

"This area used to be one of the *temoleh*'s feeding grounds.

"Back then, catching one that weighed 10kg to 20kg was nothing unusual," said fisherman Mohammad Shahrul Buari when met at Kampung Teluk Perang.

Unlike other freshwater species such as *tenggalan*, *patin* or *kelabau*, which can be caught year-round, the *temoleh* is seasonal, usually appearing between February and April when it swims upstream to spawn.

Drawing from more than a decade of experience, Shahrul explained that the *temoleh* (*Probarbus jullieni*) prefers strong river currents, far from calm shallows or riverbanks.

"Unlike other species that move in schools, *temoleh* usually travel in pairs.

"The most effective way to catch the larger ones is by setting drift nets across the river at strategic points," he said.

"This species is also only active during quiet hours, early morning or late at night.

"So, I usually head out between midnight and 7am, when the chances of catching one are higher," he added.

Their feeding habits add to the challenge.

Its diet consists mainly of small river snails found along the riverbed, making it difficult to catch by conventional angling.

"The *temoleh* isn't an easy fish to hook because of the way it feeds.

"It tends to suck in its food rather than bite, so it rarely gets caught on fishing lines," Shahrul explained to Bernama.

Apart from fishing, Shahrul also acts as a middleman, buying catches from local fishermen – including *tenggalan, kelabau, baung* and other high-value species – for resale.

Despite its rarity, the *temoleh* remains highly sought after for its flavour.

"The flesh of the *temoleh* is soft, sweet and firm, far superior to most other river fish, especially when steamed, curried or grilled," he said.

"Most of my customers, particularly from the Chinese community in Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Pahang, are willing to travel here just to buy it.

"They prefer fish weighing five kilogrammes or more, as the texture is perfect for steaming."

To meet demand, Shahrul has turned to social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube and TikTok to promote his catches.

Thanks to this online reach, demand for *temoleh* remains strong, with prices ranging from RM80 to RM150 per kg, depending on size and grade.

Yet, behind the demand lies a troubling reality.

Shahrul admits the future of the species looks increasingly bleak due to invasive species such as the redtail catfish (*baung ekor merah*), *patin lawi* and Mekong catfish.

"These invasive species are aggressive. A *temoleh* weighing just four or five kg doesn't stand a chance against them. I believe that's one of the reasons large *temoleh* are becoming so rare," he said.

He explained that many of these foreign species are farmed in cages along the Perak River, particularly near Teluk Intan.

Problems arise when cages break open, releasing the fish into the ecosystem.

"There's nothing wrong with farming non-native fish but once they escape, they breed rapidly and threaten native species. There really should be stricter control over this," he said.

Concerned about the risk of extinction, Shahrul hopes authorities would act quickly to protect the *temoleh*.

He believes more restocking efforts and breeding programmes are urgently needed to help the species recover.

"If no immediate action is taken, I'm afraid one day the *temoleh* will only exist in stories and no longer be in our rivers," he said.

Perak Fisheries Department director Ghazali Manap confirmed the species is under serious threat.

Department data shows a sharp decline in *temoleh* landings over the past five years, with only 116.4kg recorded as of August this year, compared with over 3,000kg throughout 2023.

"Conservation and restocking efforts are actively underway to boost the natural population of this species, not only in Central Perak but also in districts such as Gerik, Kuala Kangsar, Batang Padang and Muallim," he said.

"However, these efforts face multiple challenges, including habitat disruption, uncontrolled fishing and threats from invasive species," he added.

To address these issues, the department has launched several initiatives, including fishing competitions targeting invasive fish.

One such event, the Grand Prix Memburu Ikan Asing 2025, successfully removed more than two metric tonnes of invasive fish from local rivers, with more contests planned.

"This is no small threat, which is why we're involving the community. The role of local fishing groups such as MyKomuniti Nelayan Teluk Perang is crucial in providing information and monitoring river activities," Ghazali said.

He added that the department is finalising amendments to the Perak Fisheries (River) Rules 1992, which will soon list the *temoleh* as a protected species to prevent uncontrolled fishing.

"If everyone plays their part, we can not only save the *temoleh* from extinction but also preserve it as a living symbol of the Perak River heritage, something we can pass on to future generations," he said.

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Thai queen mother dies at 93

One-year mourning period declared

BANGKOK: Thailand's Queen Mother Sirikit has died at age 93, the Thai Royal Household Bureau said yesterday.

Sirikit had been out of the public eye since a stroke in 2012.

The palace said she had been hospitalised since 2019 due to several illnesses and developed an infection on Oct 17 before passing away on Friday.

A mourning period of one year has been declared for members of the royal family and household.

Prime Minister Anutin Charnvirakul said flags would be flown at half-mast for 30 days out of respect for the late queen.

Government workers would be required to wear mourning attire for one year, he said, while the public "may adjust as appropriate, but we are asking for cooperation to wear black or dark colours for 90 days".

Authorities have suspended most weddings and concerts.

The late queen's remains is set to be moved from the hospital to the Grand Palace today for a funeral in the afternoon.

Sirikit's husband, King Bhumibol Adulyadej, was Thailand's longest-reigning monarch, with 70 years on the throne since 1946.

She was at his side for much of that, winning over hearts at home with their charity work.

When they travelled abroad, she also charmed the world's media with her beauty and fashion sense.

During a 1960 visit to the United States that included a state dinner at the White House, *Time* magazine called her "svelte" and "archfeminist".

The French daily *L'Aurore* described her as "ravishing".

Born in 1932, the year Thailand transitioned to a constitutional monarchy from an absolute monarchy, Sirikit Kitiyakara was the daughter of Thailand's ambassador to France and led a life of wealth and privilege.

While studying music and language in Paris, she met Bhumibol, who had spent part of his childhood in Switzerland.

"It was hate at first sight," she said in a BBC documentary, adding that he had arrived late for their first meeting.

"Then, it was love."

The couple spent time together in Paris and were engaged in 1949. They married in Thailand a year later when she was 17.

Always stylish, Sirikit collaborated with French couturier Pierre Balmain on eye-catching outfits made from Thai silk.

By supporting the preservation of traditional weaving practices, she is credited with helping revitalise Thailand's silk industry.

For more than four decades, she frequently travelled with the king to remote Thai villages, promoting development projects for the rural poor, their activities televised nightly on the country's *Royal Bulletin*.

She was briefly regent in 1956, when her husband spent two weeks in a temple, studying to become a Buddhist monk in a rite of passage common in Thailand.

In 1976, her birthday, Aug 12, became Mother's Day and a national holiday in Thailand.

Her only son, now King Maha Vajiralongkorn, also known as Rama X, succeeded Bhumibol after his death in 2016 and upon his coronation in 2019, Sirikit's formal title became the Queen Mother. She is survived by her son, the king, as well as three daughters. – Reuters/AFP



Thai mourners hold portraits of Queen Mother Sirikit in front of Chulalongkorn Hospital yesterday. – *AFPPIC*

Vietnam confirms two more DPMs

HANOI: Vietnam's National Assembly, the country's lawmaking body, confirmed yesterday the appointments of two new deputy prime ministers and three ministers.

The additional deputy prime ministers include former home affairs minister Pham Thi Thanh Tra and former Communist Party chief of Gia Lai province Ho Quoc Dung, Vietnam News Agency reported.

The move raises the number of deputy prime ministers to nine.

The assembly also confirmed the appointments of the ministers of foreign affairs, agriculture and home affairs.

The National Assembly began its final session of the year on Monday, which will run until Dec 11. – Reuters

More than 60 nations sign cybercrime treaty

HANOI: More than 60 countries signed their first UN treaty targeting cybercrime in Hanoi yesterday, despite opposition from an unlikely band of tech companies and rights groups warning of expanded state surveillance.

The new global legal framework aims to strengthen international cooperation to fight digital crimes, from child pornography to transnational cyberscams and money laundering.

The treaty will go into force once ratified by the states.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres described the signing as an "important milestone", but that it was "only the beginning".

"Every day, sophisticated scams destroy families, steal migrants and drain billions of dollars from our economy. We need a strong, connected global response," he said at the opening ceremony in Hanoi.

The UN Convention against Cybercrime was first proposed by Russian diplomats in 2017, and approved by consensus last year after lengthy negotiations.

Critics say its broad language could lead to abuses of power and enable the cross-border repression of government critics.

"There were concerns raised throughout the negotiation of the treaty around how it actually ends up compelling companies to share data," said Sabhanaz Rashid Diya, founder of the Tech Global Institute think tank.

"It's almost rubber-stamping a very problematic practice that has been used against journalists and in authoritarian countries," she said.

Vietnam's government said this week that 60 countries were registered for the official signing, without disclosing which ones.

But the list would probably not be limited to Russia, China and their allies.

The far-reaching online scam industry, for example, has ballooned in Southeast Asia in recent years, with thousands of scammers estimated to be involved and victims worldwide conned out of billions of dollars annually.

Big technology companies have also raised concerns.

The Cybersecurity Tech Accord delegation to the treaty talks, representing more than 160 firms including Meta, Dell and India's Infosys, will not be present in Hanoi, its head Nick Ashton-Hart said.

Among other objections, those companies previously warned that the convention could criminalise cybersecurity researchers and "allow states to cooperate on almost any criminal act they choose".

Potential overreach by authorities poses "serious risks to corporate IT systems relied upon by billions of people every day", they said during the negotiation process. – AFP

North Korea using crypto, IT workers to dodge UN sanctions

SEOUL: North Korea is circumventing UN sanctions by using cryptocurrency to trade raw materials and military weaponry, and by deploying large numbers of IT workers abroad to launder funds and generate income for Pyongyang, a monitoring group reported.

Under leader Kim Jong Un, Pyongyang has ramped up cyber operations in recent years, turning hacking into a key source of foreign currency in the face of biting sanctions over its nuclear and weapons programmes.

The Multilateral Sanctions Monitoring Team (MSMT) found that North Korea's sophisticated cyber force had stolen at least US$1.65 billion (RM6.96 billion) from January to September, including US$1.4 billion from crypto exchange Bybit in February.

That was in addition to North Korea's ill-gotten cryptocurrency gains of US$1.2 billion last year, the group said.

Pyongyang funnels the funds into "the unlawful development of its WMD (weapons of mass destruction) and ballistic missile programmes", it said.

The report's authors found that officials used a cryptocurrency called stablecoin "for transactions, including the sale and transfer of military equipment and raw materials such as copper, which is used in munitions production".

The country further evaded UN sanctions by sending IT workers to at least eight countries.

Most went to China, but others were dispatched to Russia, Laos, Cambodia, Equatorial Guinea, Guinea, Nigeria and Tanzania.

MSMT also found that North Korea was planning to send "40,000 labourers to Russia".

Under UN sanctions, North Korean workers are prohibited from earning money abroad.

MSMT also cited a report by 38 North, a specialist analysis programme run by the Stimson Centre, stating that North Korean workers secured contracts to work on animation projects steered by companies such as Amazon and HBO Max.

An Amazon spokesperson said the company had never hired any such workers directly. – AFP

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Putin envoy: Ukraine deal possible

'Talks close to diplomatic solution'

WASHINGTON: Kirill Dmitriev *(pic)*, Russian President Vladimir Putin's special envoy for investment and economic cooperation, said on Friday he believes his country, the United States and Ukraine are close to a diplomatic solution to end the war in Ukraine.

Speaking to CNN after arriving in Washington for talks with US officials, Dmitriev said a meeting between US President Donald Trump and Putin had not been cancelled and that the two leaders will likely meet at a later date.

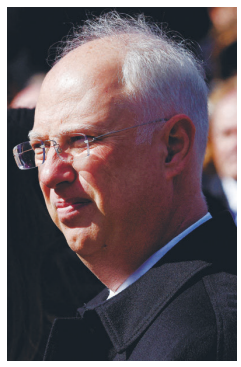
The planned summit was put on hold on Tuesday, as Russia's rejection of an immediate ceasefire cast a cloud over attempts at negotiations.

Trump said he cancelled the planned meeting with Putin in Budapest because of a lack of progress in diplomatic efforts toward ending the war and a sense that the timing was off.

However, Dmitriev on Friday said: "I believe Russia and the US and Ukraine are actually quite close to a diplomatic solution."

Dmitriev in his comments did not offer details of what this would entail.

European nations are working with Ukraine on a new proposal for a ceasefire in the war along current battle lines, European diplomats said this week, mainly incorporating ideas already under discussion while pressing to keep the United States in a central role.



"It's a big move by President Zelenskiy to already acknowledge that it's about battle lines," Dmitriev said.

"You know, his previous position was that Russia should leave completely. So actually, I think we are reasonably close to a diplomatic solution that can be worked out."

Russia launched its large-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022.

Trump had announced last week that he and Putin would meet soon in Hungary to try to bring an end to the war.

But Putin has been unwilling to consider concessions.

Russia has long demanded that Ukraine agree to cede more territory before any ceasefire.

Dmitriev's visit to the United States for a long-planned meeting takes place against the backdrop of newly announced US sanctions on two of Russia's biggest oil companies – a move aimed at pressing Putin to end the war.

Despite the move, Dmitriev said dialogue between Russia and the United States would continue.

"It is certainly only possible if Russia's interests are taken into account and treated with respect," Dmitriev said earlier.

He declined to say who he was meeting and predicted that the US oil sanctions would backfire.

"They will only lead to gasoline costing more at American gas stations," Dmitriev said.

The US news outlet Axios reported that Dmitriev would meet Trump special envoy Steve Witkoff in Miami on Saturday.

TASS news agency quoted Dmitriev as saying he would also meet other people, without disclosing their names. – Reuters



Palestinian worshippers at a memorial service on Friday at the Greek Orthodox Saint Porphyrius Church in Gaza City to honour those killed during the war, including victims of the 2023 Israeli strike on the church. – *REUTERSPIC*

Quick deployment of Gaza force sought

KIRYAT GAT: Top US diplomat Marco Rubio voiced hope on Friday of quickly putting together an international force to police the ceasefire in Gaza, as Palestinian factions agreed that a committee of technocrats would run the post-war territory.

The secretary of state visited Israel on the heels of Vice-President J.D. Vance as part of an all-out effort by the United States to persuade Hamas and Israel to respect the truce.

Rubio said it was critical for the deal to create "the conditions for the stabilisation force to come in as soon as it possibly can be put together".

He expressed optimism for a durable end to the two-year Gaza war as he met Israeli, US and other Western forces monitoring the ceasefire from inside a vast converted warehouse in southern Israel.

The deal, spearheaded by President Donald Trump, calls for an international force to oversee security after Israel's ceasefire with Hamas.

The main Palestinian factions, including Hamas, said on Friday they had agreed during a meeting in Cairo that a temporary Palestinian committee of independent technocrats would take over the running of Gaza.

The committee would "manage the affairs of life and basic services in cooperation with Arab brothers and international institutions", according to a joint statement published on Hamas' website.

The statement also urged a meeting of all forces and factions to "agree on a national strategy and to revitalise the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people".

Hamas is not part of the PLO, which is dominated by its rival Fatah.

Hamas, which seized power in Gaza in 2007, has already made it clear that it does not wish to govern the post-war territory, but it has pushed back against the insistence that it disarm its fighters.

"We have agreed on the arrangements for the second phase of managing Gaza, affirming that it will be under Palestinian administration, with no separation between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank," Hamas spokesman Hazem Qassem said in a statement.

"The upcoming meetings will address the relationship with the occupation, the fate of the resistance's weapons and discussions regarding the presence of international forces." – AFP

US sanctions Colombian president

WASHINGTON: The US on Friday imposed sanctions on Colombian President Gustavo Petro, as President Donald Trump sharply escalated a feud with Washington's Latin American ally over accusations that Petro has refused to stop the flow of cocaine into the United States.

Tensions between Washington and many countries in the region have been mounting for weeks.

The US military has ratcheted up activity in the southern Caribbean, striking vessels in international waters that it has alleged without evidence are carrying drugs.

Trump this week called Petro an "illegal drug leader" after the leftist president accused the US of committing "murder" with the strikes.

Petro, whose term will end in 10 months, has always opposed the strikes.

He has attempted to end Colombia's six-decade conflict through peace and surrender deals with rebels and crime gangs, but those efforts have borne little fruit.

Petro disputes the basis for the US allegations, saying his government has seized cocaine at unprecedented rates and that expansion of coca crops, the base ingredient for cocaine, has slowed every year since 2021.

"My government has seized more cocaine than in the whole history of the world." – Reuters

Three held over illicit uranium trade

TBILIS: Georgia's internal security service said yesterday that it had arrested three Chinese citizens for attempting to illegally buy two kilogrammes of "nuclear material" uranium.

Its deputy head said the three detainees had been planning to buy the uranium for US$400,000 (RM1.7 million) and transport it to China, via Russia.

The security official said the detainees faced charges that could see them imprisoned for up to 10 years.

The security of nuclear materials left over from the Soviet era was one of the biggest concerns after the 1991 fall of the Soviet Union, of which Georgia was a member.

There have been several incidents involving the illicit trade in nuclear materials in Georgia over recent decades.

In July, Georgia arrested one Georgian and one Turkish national, charged with the illegal purchase, possession and disposal of radioactive substances. – Reuters

Rescued gorilla to stay in Turkiye

ISTANBUL: A baby gorilla rescued from trafficking at Istanbul Airport just before Christmas will remain in Turkiye rather than be repatriated to Nigeria.

The primate was five months old when he was discovered inside a wooden crate in the cargo section of a plane en route from Nigeria to Thailand, and taken to a zoo outside Istanbul to recover.

Named Zeytin, Turkish for olive, he was nursed back to health with the aim of sending him back to Nigeria, where he began his journey, in line with the regulations in the CITES treaty limiting the trade of protected animals.

Following a Nigerian request for his repatriation, Turkiye's nature conservation and national parks directorate began the process but stopped it after a DNA test confirmed Zeytin belonged to a species that was not native to Nigeria. – AFP

the Sunday Special

OCTOBER 26, 2025



How burnout became the new normal

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The mental toll of burnout culture

The pressure to stay productive has turned everyday life into a marathon and few are crossing the finish line unscathed

BY **AQILAH NAJWA JAMALUDDIN**

LONG commutes, rigid nine-to-five routines and constant micromanagement are pushing Malaysian workers to the brink. At this point, burnout is no longer a fleeting complaint. It has become a defining feature of the modern working world.

While Covid-19 momentarily disrupted the traditional office landscape, prompting a wave of flexibility and remote work, many companies have since reverted to their pre-pandemic ways.

As the world recovers, it begs the question: Did we learn nothing from 2020?

According to the Wellness at Work report, employee burnout in Malaysia rose sharply from 58% in 2022 to 67% in 2024. The figures are more than alarming. They reflect an urgent need for mental health support and meaningful reform in workplace culture.

Millennials are the hardest hit, with 69% reporting burnout, followed closely by Gen Z at 64%. The youngest generations are also the most emotionally exhausted.

Sharifah Hani, a Malaysian career strategist, WOSSO Fellow and SDG 8 advocate with more than eight years of experience across the public, private and social sectors, explained that the issue runs deeper than surface-level stress.

"Many clients come to me for career transitions because they have reached a breaking point," she shared.

"The problem is that burnout is still seen as a personal weakness rather than a structural failure. Companies often expect individuals to self-care their way out of systemic overwork."

What is burnout?

Before individuals or organisations can truly address the issue, they must first recognise what burnout really means. According to the World Health Organisation, burnout is a condition that results from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.

Once believed to be limited to human services, it is now recognised as a serious occupational health concern across almost every sector.

It's important to understand that while burnout stems from stress, the two are not the same. Stress is often temporary and can be eased with proper management techniques.

Burnout, on the other hand, is something else entirely. It is the result of prolonged, unmanaged stress that accumulates over time until it depletes both the mind and body.

Once burnout takes hold, it cannot be undone by a single solution. A long holiday, slower work pace or attempts at achieving work-life balance are rarely enough.



"When people feel seen and supported, productivity naturally follows."

Burnout cannot be solved by rest alone. It requires a deeper shift both internally and systemically.

"I've seen a growing number of employees struggling to maintain boundaries.

"Hybrid work has created an unspoken expectation to be constantly reachable both in the office and online. It blurs the line between professional and personal space," Sharifah noted.

She observed that a widening disconnect has emerged between what employers expect and what employees now prioritise. Flexibility, autonomy and well-being top the list for workers, while many companies still cling to outdated models of control and presenteeism.

"The recent push to return to the office has only added to that discontent, especially when employees have proven they can perform just as well, if not better, while working from home. It raises the question of whether these return-to-office mandates are really about productivity or about senior management feeling in control."

"Burnout is not an individual flaw — it's a collective crisis."

Sharifah



Boundaries aren't resistance, they're the foundation of sustainable productivity.

The symptoms of burnout

As someone who runs her own career practice and works closely with early-to-mid professionals, Sharifah explained that burnout may look similar on the surface, but its triggers often vary from person to person. What overwhelms one individual may feel entirely manageable to another; that's why blanket solutions rarely work.

In the simplest terms, the key symptom of burnout is exhaustion, not just tiredness, but a profound, bone-deep fatigue that no amount of sleep, rest or time off seems to fix.

What makes it even more alarming is that this chronic exhaustion rarely exists on its own. It begins to ripple into other parts of working life, distorting how we see our value, dampening our sense of purpose and leading to resentment toward those around us. Colleagues, clients and even the organisation itself can become sources of emotional friction.

When you are burnt out, you may experience brain fog, reduced creativity and a sharp decline in focus. Procrastination sets in. Tasks that once felt meaningful are replaced by a string of unproductive, mindless activities, a desperate attempt to feel busy without truly engaging.

For those in creative industries such as writing, design or content creation, burnout is not just emotionally draining; it can become a full-blown crisis.

When your creativity is your currency, mental blockages caused by burnout disrupt not only your workflow but also your reputation and credibility. The result is a domino effect and by the time you recognise it, the damage is often already in motion.

"In banking, burnout is often due to extreme working hours and client demands. In education, it's the emotional labour of teaching combined with administrative overload. Oil and gas tend to have high-risk environments where safety pressures add to workload stress.

In the civil service, bureaucracy and slow processes can be just as exhausting as overwork. The common thread is lack of control over workload and pace, that's what fuels burnout," Sharifah explained.

Addressing the core problem

In Malaysia, one of the most overlooked causes of fatigue, stress and burnout is the outdated five-day office policy, a system many believe should have been left behind long ago. Yet despite growing evidence of its toll, most companies continue to ignore the obvious issue – the exhausting daily commute.

Whether by car, train or carpool, Malaysians face one of the country's most persistent problems, traffic congestion.

Studies show that Malaysians collectively spend an estimated one million hours a year in traffic, with average daily commutes lasting between one and two hours.

For those relying on public transport, the experience is often worse, involving overcrowded trains and buses that heighten both physical and mental strain. By the time they arrive at the office, many are already carrying the weight of the morning's stress.

For working parents and caregivers, the pressure is even more intense. Balancing professional demands with family responsibilities becomes a daily juggling act. Emotional exhaustion sets in long before the workday begins, yet expectations to perform remain unchanged.

"Cultural values like jaga muka often lead people to take on extra work to avoid embarrassment, even when it's beyond their capacity," Sharifah explained.

"The reluctance to say no, along with fear of being seen as lazy, has created a culture where overcommitment is normal. Over time, this slowly erodes well-being and productivity."

Until these structural and cultural challenges are recognised and reformed, burnout will continue to fester beneath the surface. It's not an individual flaw, it's a collective crisis.

"We need a movement for sustainable work, one that moves beyond simply embedding rest into existing workflows," she urged.

"This means designing realistic workloads, prioritising tasks that genuinely add value and creating an environment where people can perform over the long term without burning out. Without proper measurement, structural reform and accountable leadership, mental health initiatives risk becoming little more than a plaster over a much deeper wound."

Addressing toxic work culture

The conversation around workplace bullying and mental neglect is gaining momentum in Malaysia. But while awareness has improved, turning talk into real change remains a challenge. Many organisations are still navigating how to build healthier, more supportive workplaces and in the process, some employees may not always receive the support they need.

"Since moving into recruitment, I've noticed a common gap across many organisations – data," Sharifah observed.

"Companies often avoid tracking employee well-being, allowing burnout to persist unchecked. We need a movement for sustainable work that goes beyond simply embedding rest into workflows.

"It means designing workloads that are realistic, prioritising tasks that truly add value and creating an environment where employees can perform effectively over the long term without risking burnout," she added.

As the nation moves towards greater development and stability, Malaysia too must take serious precautions to protect the mental health and well-being of its workforce. Companies should shift performance metrics from "hours worked" to "outcomes achieved", encouraging efficiency and balance rather than rewarding presenteeism.

Organisations can begin tracking employee well-being through anonymous surveys, turnover rates or sick leave data. Without measurable indicators, signs of burnout are easily dismissed or go unnoticed by leadership.

At the policy level, Malaysia would benefit from more explicit labour protections, including maximum working hours and right-to-disconnect laws that offer employees the legal grounds to maintain boundaries.

These policies reflect a growing global awareness of employee well-being, a step Malaysia urgently needs if it hopes to address the country's rising burnout levels.

On the flip side, employees must also feel empowered to establish and maintain boundaries.

"Make deliberate choices about when and how you engage, while keeping colleagues and managers informed about your workload and capacity."

But this must be done strategically. Documenting your workload provides tangible evidence when declining additional tasks. Boundaries, Sharifah noted, should be framed not as resistance but as a means of protecting productivity.

In July 2025, the Malaysian government officially recognised workplace bullying and harassment as criminal offences.

With the enforcement of the Penal Code (Amendment) Act 2025 and the Criminal Procedure Code (Amendment) Act 2025 on July 11, the government has taken a firm stand against all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, by introducing stronger legal protections and clearer pathways to justice.

If you're facing unrealistic work demands that could lead to burnout, chronic stress or PTSD, know that you have the right to report it. Your well-being is protected by law.



Traffic congestion remains one of the biggest contributors to daily fatigue and workplace stress.

Young voices, real power

BY **HANNEF ESQUANDER**



YOUTH activism in Malaysia today is no longer just about protests or campus politics. It has become a steady and growing presence, quietly shaping conversations around issues like climate change, education and inequality. Young Malaysians are becoming more aware of the world they live in and more confident in their ability to make a difference. Whether through campaigns, volunteer work or even meeting with policymakers, they are slowly but surely finding ways to be heard.

This new generation is not waiting to be told what to do. They are forming their own communities, building movements and challenging the idea that change must always come from the top. From student groups to grassroots collectives, these efforts may not always make the headlines, but they are making an impact. One of them is Klima Action Malaysia (KAMY), a feminist climate justice organisation advancing rights-based, gender-responsive climate governance in Malaysia.

KAMY is working towards RUUPIN (National Climate Change Bill), Malaysia's first proposed climate change law to establish a national legal framework for climate governance, including emissions reporting and reduction mechanisms.

It is one thing to be told that young people need to care more about climate change. It is another thing entirely to be shut out of the very rooms where decisions are made about their future. For Aroe Ajoeni of KAMY, that disconnect is precisely why she became a climate activist. She realised how disconnected policymaking is from the people it actually affects.



Aroe draws inspiration from the global youth climate movement.



Youth-led climate groups are proving that meaningful change can start from collaboration and clarity.

"While working on RUUPIN, I learned how complicated and inaccessible these processes can be. Here's legislation that will shape Malaysia's climate response for decades – yet the consultation period was initially just one month, the document was overwhelming for most people and there was barely any public awareness about it," said Aroe.

For her, this journey into climate advocacy revealed something deeper than the policy papers themselves.

"This is about more than just climate change. It's also about whether young people truly have space in decision-making as well as a space to understand, engage and shape policies that will define our future."

Youth-led organisations like KAMY are stepping in to bridge that gap. In the case of RUUPIN, Aroe and her peers took it upon themselves to simplify complex documents, translate legal language into accessible infographics and share these resources online.

"We're not just activists. We're part of a generation making public engagement easier for everyone," she said.

RUUPIN has been positioned as a major step forward – a national commitment to strengthening Malaysia's climate response. In reviewing its early drafts, Aroe and other civil society groups saw opportunities to strengthen the bill further, particularly in its attention to social justice.



Young Malaysians are stepping up to translate climate policy into an accessible language for the public.

We're not just activists. We're part of a generation making public engagement easier for everyone."

"There were gaps in protecting vulnerable communities, especially Indigenous peoples who are often impacted by carbon credit projects. There was also little mention of gender perspectives or youth involvement and not enough focus on adaptation," she explained.

Rather than framing this as a fault, Aroe sees it as a call to action. It is an opportunity for more voices to be included and more perspectives to be heard, as the climate crisis does not occur in isolation. It intersects with Indigenous rights, gender equality and economic justice, among many other things. Real climate action must recognise these connections and incorporate them into the conversation.

"One of the most encouraging outcomes has been the spirit of collaboration. Working with other organisations has taught me that effective advocacy requires coalition building, particularly in policy development. For RUUPIN, we collaborated with Indigenous groups, women's rights organisations and other civil society networks because we know that climate legislation affects everyone differently," she said.

This coalition-building revealed the strength of Malaysia's advocacy ecosystem and also the need for better alignment. She recognises that people often fight their own battles separately, when they could be working together towards broader, systemic change.

Malaysian youth activism around the globe

Looking outward, Aroe draws inspiration from the global youth climate movement. Across borders, young people are not only marching in the streets but sitting at the table where real decisions are made. "Young people worldwide are not just protesting. They're being included in climate planning, in policy development, in national climate councils. In Malaysia, we're still working towards that kind of participation and we're hopeful," she said.

There are clear frameworks that show how it can be done. Internationally, there are guidance documents that outline specific pathways for youth inclusion in climate governance. These are not just aspirational ideals – they are practical tools that could be adapted here in Malaysia too.

Young Malaysians have never lacked passion. What they are asking for now is structure – ways to engage meaningfully, sustainably and consistently. "We shouldn't have to decode consultation papers or run our own education campaigns just to participate. We're ready. We just want the space," she said.

Yet even with these challenges, Aroe remains hopeful because RUUPIN has awakened something powerful. It is about moving beyond just demanding action to actually shaping what that action looks like. Sitting around and hoping the right policies will appear is not enough. Everyone needs to be involved from the start.

The young Malaysians of today are clearly looking forward to change and they are actively creating it. These young people need to become genuine partners in building the solutions instead of being the ones asking for them.

Ultimately, Aroe and her peers show that youth climate activism and general advocacy efforts in Malaysia have become more focused, organised and effective. It is no longer just about raising awareness or sounding the alarm – it is about clarity, collaboration and the confidence to claim space in a conversation that matters to everyone.

With every coalition formed and every infographic shared, young Malaysians are demonstrating that they do not need permission to lead. They are already doing it with thoughtfulness, inclusivity and the quiet conviction that the future is not something they will inherit but something they are already helping to shape.



Malaysia's new generation of activists is reshaping how climate governance is discussed and understood.



KAMY is working towards RUUPIN to enhance youth engagement and inclusive policymaking.



Once only known in Japan, this sticky fermented bean is gaining global attention

Inside natto's hidden power for a healthier heart

BY **AHSRAF WAHAB**

Rich in nattokinase and vitamin K2, natto is being studied for its potential to support healthy blood flow and stronger bones.

MALAYSIA'S population has seen rising rates of hypertension, with about one in three adults affected, according to the National Health and Morbidity Survey. High blood pressure – a silent but serious risk – contributes to heart disease, stroke and even burdens our healthcare system.

That's why Malaysians are always on the lookout for simple, natural ways to support heart health. Could natto and its superstar enzyme nattokinase be the new crowd favourite, like Omega-3?

Risk of hypertension and blood clots

Let's be real – Malaysian food is delicious. However, it's not always heart-friendly.

From *nasi lemak* drenched in *sambal* and coconut-rich curries to *roti canai* with sweetened *teh tarik*, many of our favourite everyday meals are high in saturated fats, salt and sugar. While satisfying, this kind of diet can increase the risk of hypertension, cholesterol buildup and blood clots over time.

According to the Ministry of Health's 2023 National Health and Morbidity Survey, 30% of Malaysians have high blood pressure and nearly 40% have high cholesterol. That's no coincidence. Our love for deep-fried foods, processed meats (like luncheon meat, sausages and fast food) and low vegetable intake plays a significant role.

Here's how some common dietary patterns contribute to heart risk:

- **High sodium intake:** Many local dishes, such as soy sauce-based stir-fries, salted fish, instant noodles and even keropok, are packed with sodium. Excess salt increases blood pressure by retaining fluid and stressing the arteries.
- **Saturated and trans fats:** Found in dishes like curry mee, chicken chop and kuih with coconut cream, these fats raise LDL (bad cholesterol) levels, which can promote plaque buildup and clot formation.
- **Sugar overload:** Popular drinks like iced Milo, three-layer tea and desserts like ais kacang contribute to insulin resistance and inflammation, both of which are linked to poor vascular health.
- **Lack of fibre and leafy greens:** Fibre helps regulate cholesterol and blood sugar, but the average Malaysian plate rarely includes enough ulam, kacang botol or leafy vegetables unless we make a conscious effort.

All of these dietary choices, combined with increasingly sedentary lifestyles, create a perfect storm for heart issues. That's why incorporating natural blood flow supporters like nattokinase and adjusting your diet can make a difference.

What exactly are natto and nattokinase?

Natto is a traditional Japanese food made from soybeans fermented with Bacillus subtilis var. natto. It's sticky, strong-smelling and packed with nutrients, including protein, fibre, vitamins (notably vitamin K2), probiotics and heart-healthy polyunsaturated fats.

Nattokinase, despite its name, is not a kinase – it's a serine protease enzyme that helps break down fibrin, a protein involved in blood clotting. It can be consumed by eating natto or as a purified supplement.

Compared to Omega-3: Similarities and surprises

Omega-3 fatty acids (like EPA and DHA) are known for reducing inflammation, improving blood vessel function, balancing cholesterol and supporting brain health. But nattokinase offers a different angle.



It promotes healthy blood flow and blood pressure through its fibrinolytic effects. It's not a direct replacement, but another powerful tool in the heart-health kit.

Clinical evidence for nattokinase's benefits

- **Blood pressure drop in mild hypertension**
  In an eight-week randomised, double-blind trial conducted at three hospitals in Taiwan – Taichung Veterans General Hospital, Taipei Medical University Hospital and Cheng Hsin General Hospital – 86 adults with pre-hypertension or stage 1 hypertension took 2,000 FU nattokinase daily.

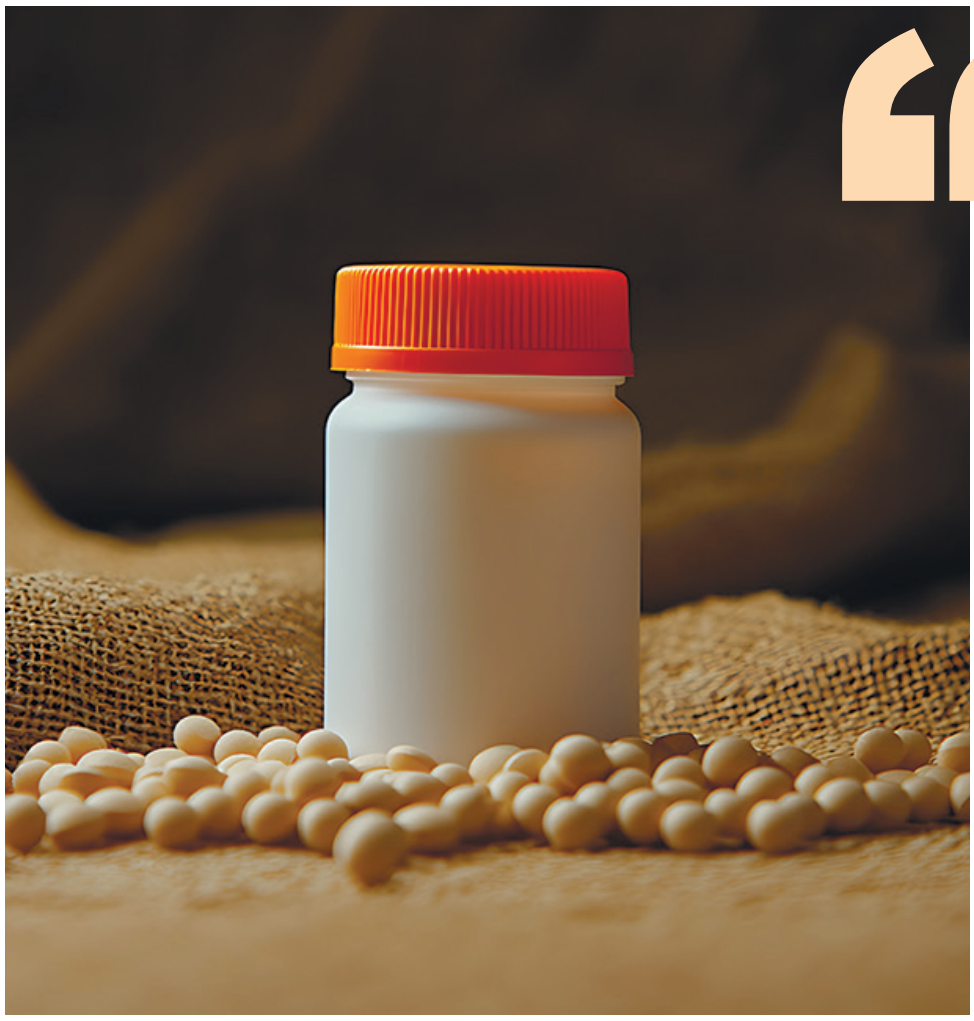
  Compared to the placebo, the nattokinase group experienced a systolic BP reduction of about 5.5 mmHg and a diastolic drop of about 2.8 mmHg. The study was published in *Hypertension Research* (PMID: 18971533).
- **Renin activity and vWF improvements in North American adults**
  Conducted in Canada, this placebo-controlled clinical trial enrolled adults aged between 18 and 75 with elevated blood pressure. Participants received 100 mg/day nattokinase over eight weeks.

  The results showed a significant reduction in diastolic blood pressure in men, improved plasma renin activity and decreased von Willebrand factor (vWF) levels in women – a marker linked to clotting risk. The study appeared in *Alternative Therapies in Health and Medicine* (PMID: 27785095).
- **Vascular support in coronary artery disease patients**
  A randomised, double-blind trial conducted in China followed patients with stable coronary artery disease over 90 days. Subjects received nattokinase combined with red yeast rice to evaluate improvements in vascular health, lipid profile and inflammatory markers.

  While detailed results are still under analysis, the trial demonstrates growing scientific interest in nattokinase for heart disease management. It was registered and published in *Frontiers in Nutrition* (DOI: 10.3389/fnut 2024.1380727).

Together, these studies suggest nattokinase supports blood pressure, blood flow and clot-related markers – areas where omega 3 also shine through cholesterol modulation and anti-inflammation.

> **Nattokinase isn't a replacement for omega 3, but a partner in supporting healthy blood pressure and circulation."**



> **For Malaysians juggling work and stress, natto could be a smart, natural ally for heart health."**

Nattokinase isn't a direct replacement for Omega 3, but it adds a unique pathway by supporting healthy blood pressure, blood flow and clot regulation. For hard-working Malaysians juggling deadlines and stress, a daily dose of nattokinase (or natto itself) could be a smart, natural way to help keep your heart in shape.

That said, always check your health status, medications and consult your healthcare provider before starting supplementation, especially if you're on blood pressure meds or blood thinners.

TL;DR: Busy lifestyle takeaways

- Natto: Fermented soy beans.
- Nattokinase: An enzyme that helps dissolve clots
- Studies show a 5 mmHg systolic BP drop after 8 weeks of nattokinase (2,000 FU)
- Choose supplements with 3rd-party testing, clear FU dosing and no K2 if on anticoagulants
- Works well alongside Omega 3 for broader cardiovascular benefits
- Not suitable for pregnant women or those at risk of bleeding. Consult a doctor first

So, if your friend calls Omega 3 the "miracle heart supplement", maybe it's time to introduce them to nattokinase -- the emerging partner in heart health for the modern Malaysian.

Additional perks of natto beyond nattokinase

- **Bone health booster:** Natto's vitamin K2 plays a key role in bone mineralisation. A 2020 study in the *Journal of Nutrition* linked natto intake to fewer osteoporotic fractures in post-menopausal Japanese women.
- **Gut-friendly fermentation:** Thanks to its live bacteria and fibre content, natto supports gut microbiome health and may ease digestion.
- **Cholesterol support:** With poly-unsaturated fats and soy proteins that help lower LDL and triglycerides, natto adds another anti-atherosclerosis layer.

What to look out for when choosing nattokinase supplements

- **Independent lab testing is a must:** Supplements aren't tightly regulated in Malaysia. Check for third-party certification such as USP, NSF or Labdoor to confirm purity and potency.
- **Vitamin K2 content matters:** Some use nattokinase extracted from natto but leave out vitamin K2, ideal for those on anticoagulants such as warfarin.
- **Enzyme units (FU) vs weight:** Standard dosing in studies is 100–2,000 FU per day (FU = fibrinolytic units). Avoid vague milligram-only labels.
- **Avoid interactions:** Nattokinase may increase bleeding risk, so talk to your doctor if you're on blood thinners, have low blood pressure or are pregnant – a caution flagged by health sites such as Verywell and WebMD.
- **Storage and expiry:** Keep bottles cool and sealed. Heat, light or humidity can degrade enzymes. Note the expiry date.

It can be consumed through natto or taken as a purified supplement.

Practical tips for busy Malaysians
Here's how to include either natto or nattokinase in real life:

Option	Form	How to take
Natto	Fermented soy beans	½ to 1 cup with rice or oats at breakfast. Add chilli and sesame oil for taste.
Nattokinase supplement	Capsules/tablets	Choose 100-2000 FU/day as studied. Pair with food to improve absorption.
Stack with Omega 3	Fish oil or flaxseed oil capsules + nattokinase	This combo covers clotting, inflammation and vessel health—but monitor dosing and interactions.



Enjoy natto with rice or oats for a quick, nutrient-dense breakfast that supports long-term wellness.



Fall trends to know now

BY **HANNEF ESQUANDER**

A lot can be said about fashion these days. For those who follow the world of fashion closely, they are very much aware of all the changes currently taking place and all the ways fashion is evolving from what it was in the past.

One change that everyone always looks forward to is the change of season. As we bid farewell to summer, we welcome the season of autumn, anticipating the cold weather and a whole new set of trends to wear. Even the trends these days are changing faster than ever, with the growing number of fashion influencers and content on social media. There is also the rise of 'micro-trends' that arrive like a giant cannon but disappear in the blink of an eye, faster than we can even say 'old money'.

Everyone may want to dress a certain way because that is what they saw on their social media feed, but having a good eye and taste for fashion will save you from looking like everybody else on the streets. Some people actually want that, and it is okay too. For those of us who want to stay true to our personal style while being stylish, here are some of the biggest autumn 2025 trends and how to wear them.

Leopard print is all over the autumn runway at Versace and Saint Laurent. Of course, it is nothing new. Fashion has embraced the print since the Swinging Sixties, but we are just updating how we wear it in 2025. This time around, the print is magnified and can be worn as handbags, mini skirts and long coats. Is this Shania Twain's music video for Man! I Feel Like a Woman! All over again? Yes, but less in-your-face and more elevated.

Brown leather evokes the style of past decades, such as the seventies and the vintage items from that era. Think Tom Ford for Gucci in the nineties, but styled to fit the lifestyle of the current decade. A brown leather coat or knee-high boots look less severe than if worn in black. Demna Gvasalia is no longer at Balenciaga and we should all retire the all-black goth look, too. Brown leather accessories, such as shoulder bags and pumps, will look good even when paired with basic white and denim.

It seems like Y2K fashion is not going away any time soon, but the trends have moved slightly deeper into the early 2000s. We are now entering the era of Paris Hilton, Lindsay Lohan and the Olsen twins when they were at NYU. Low-rise jeans were all the craze and more than 20 years later, we are scouring the racks at vintage stores for these jeans again. The trend might be back, but this time we are wearing it in a more put-together manner, a departure from the messy party-girl style of the past. A crop top is always a good match, but a sweatshirt just short enough to let a little skin peek through is even better.

Another early 2000s trend making a comeback is the slouchy boho bag. Think Chloé Paddington, Balenciaga City bag and all of Marc Jacobs' It-bags from the era. The resurgence is primarily attributed to the younger generation of fashion enthusiasts and their penchant for thrifting and vintage shopping. Just like back in their heyday, these bags can be worn from daytime to night-time and for both work and play. If you still have any of these bags from 20 years ago, you have definitely made the right kind of investment.

We used to belt everything from blouses and mini dresses to high-waisted trousers and mini skirts. The belt once again becomes the focal point of an outfit, not only accessorising but also adding a touch of glamour to the look. A studded western belt looks perfect with denim jeans and skirts. For a more feminine look, opt for a chain or corset-style belt that beautifully cinches the waist of any oversized jacket or shift dress.

The basic razor-sharp silhouette of power dressing and bodycon dresses has been replaced with Chloé's signature boho styling, courtesy of designer Chemena Kamali. Romantic ruffles will be all the rage this autumn. The dresses are draped to the floor in ruffles, immediately making us think of Florence Welch of *Florence + The Machine*. Even the trousers receive the same treatment, occasionally blending into a maxi skirt. Earn extra cool-girl points by pairing your ruffles with trainers.

As fashion evolves at lightning speed, staying stylish requires finding a balance between embracing new trends and staying true to your personal aesthetic. Autumn 2025 offers plenty of opportunities to do just that, with nostalgic throwbacks, bold prints and refined accessories leading the way. Whether you are reviving a vintage favourite or trying something fresh off the runway, the key is to wear it with confidence and make it your own.



A brown leather jacket channels '70s vintage charm – timeless, versatile and perfect for autumn layering.

The authentic taste of Malay heritage

These restaurants serve up memory, nostalgia and a reverence for tradition

BY **AQILAH NAJWA JAMALUDDIN**

KUALA LUMPUR is a city of many moods. Glittering skyscrapers stand tall above tree-lined streets while the air carries the scent of smoky sambal, spiced gravies and coconut milk slow-simmering in old clay pots.

Beneath the city's modern gloss, KL's beating heart is still undeniably, deliciously Malay. For the epicurious and the culturally curious, the city offers an evocative map of flavours, where each plate tells a story of family, of heritage, of kampung life now elevated for the discerning urban palate.

If you are on the hunt for the best authentic Malay food in the capital, allow this to be your curated guide. These five restaurants offer more than just food. They serve up memory, nostalgia and a reverence for tradition.

Bijan
Tucked discreetly along Jalan Ceylon, Bijan is where old-school Malay cuisine meets quiet luxury. The ambience is intimate yet polished, the kind of place where you would take someone to impress without losing cultural soul.

Think rich renditions of rendang tok, a smoky kerisik-laced version hailing from Perak, or the *rusuk panggang*, a slow-roasted beef rib marinated with traditional spices and finished with a tamarind glaze.

The desserts deserve equal attention, too. The all-time favourite, pandan *pudding with gula melaka* drizzle, is a love letter in pudding form.

Address: 3, Jalan Ceylon, Bukit Ceylon, 50200 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur



Cili Kampung
True to its name, Cili Kampung celebrates the fiery boldness of Malay cuisine. Found in locations like Suria KLCC and 1 Utama, the restaurant delivers dishes that feel like they were lifted straight from your nenek's kitchen.

Try the signature *ayam kampung goreng berempah*, served hot and fragrant with crackling skin and tender meat, or their *ikan jenahak masak lemak cili api*, which swims in a golden pool of turmeric coconut gravy and unapologetic heat.

Cili Kampung doesn't apologise for being what it is: hearty, spicy and unmistakably Malay. It's where you go when you miss home or need a meal that comforts you right down to your bones.

Located at: Hartamas Shopping Centre, Suria KLCC and 1 Utama.





Congkak Nusantara
Set within a charming colonial house, Congkak Nusantara is a hidden gem that pays tribute not only to Malay flavours but also to the wider culinary heritage of the Nusantara region. This is where Johor meets Java, where *Minang* touches Malacca and everything feels like a reunion of roots.

The restaurant's namesake dish, *nasi ambeng*, comes served in generous platters meant for sharing. You'll get a mix of spiced fried chicken, *sambal goreng*, fried tempeh, *serunding* and beef rendang - all nestled around fragrant white rice. Congkak is the kind of place that reminds you that food is better when eaten together. The space is warm with soft lighting, rattan chairs and traditional wooden accents that set the mood for intimate catch-ups or even casual group feasts.

Address: 24, Jalan Beremi, Off Jalan Sultan Ismail, Bukit Bintang 50200 Kuala Lumpur



OpenHouse
Imagine Malay food in a gilded dreamscape. Located at Jalan Stonor, OpenHouse is equal parts art installation and culinary time capsule. Every detail, from the batik-lined ceilings to the curated playlist of traditional tunes, invites you to lean into a more opulent Malaysia.

But don't let the lush interiors distract you from what's on the table. OpenHouse brings heritage recipes from across the archipelago, reviving forgotten dishes with slow-cooked reverence. The daging salai masak lemak is deeply comforting, while their kerabu jantung pisang is a tart floral surprise.

Their menu includes rare royal favourites, including dishes once served in old palaces and weddings long past.

Address: 2, Jalan Stonor, Kuala Lumpur, 50450 Kuala Lumpur, Wilayah Persekutuan Kuala Lumpur

Rebung
A brainchild of celebrity chef Dato' Chef Ismail, Rebung is perhaps KL's best-kept not-so-secret. Sitting near the Perdana Botanical Garden, Rebung feels like walking into a living museum of Malay culinary tradition.

From *tempoyak ikan patin* to ketupat palas and even traditional kuih that are becoming harder to find in the city. Rebung offers the comforting chaos of a kenduri, where multiple generations gather and you can't decide whether to start with *lontong* or skip straight to *sambal udang*.

Every corner of Rebung is steeped in personal stories. Chef Ismail himself is known to greet guests, regaling them with tales of his grandmother's cooking and the cultural meaning behind each dish. It is food with history and history with heart.

Address: 5-2 Cascade Parking Bukit Aman, 1, Jalan Tanglin, 50480 Kuala Lumpur



Exploring art through illustrations and stories

> **Art helps me process things, but it also helps me connect with others. It becomes a dialogue, even when words are not involved."**

BY **DAYANA SOBRI**



Afi wants to keep creating her own rhythm and offer others a space to breathe through her art.



Malaysian Food Tales is an illustrated book that celebrates local culture through slow, meditative storytelling.meditative storytelling.

IT'S often said that a picture paints a thousand words. But for Malaysian illustrator and visual storyteller Afi Sulaiman, it's not just the picture – it's the world that comes alive within and around it. Known for her whimsical linework, delicate texture from wallpapers, and heartfelt narratives, Afi's work speaks softly yet powerfully of emotions, moments and memories often left unspoken.

Her illustrations, which have graced zines, children's books and gallery walls, tread the space between reality and imagination – sometimes lovely, sometimes melancholic, but always human. On Instagram, she shares both sketches and snippets of daily life, gathering a growing community of followers who are drawn to the gentle intimacy of her art.

"I've always been interested in how stories make people feel seen," Afi said. "Art helps me process things, but it also helps me connect with others. It becomes a dialogue, even when words are not involved."

From sketchbook to soul work

Afi's journey as a creative didn't begin with a grand vision. Like many artists, it started with doodles in the margins of school notebooks. She eventually pursued formal education in architecture but found herself more drawn to the tactile intimacy of pen, paper and digital collage.

Her early illustrations – shared online – captured quiet everyday scenes: a happy family together during *Hari Raya*, a table full of Malaysian delicacies and *kueh*, adorable furry friends that tug at your heart or quirky affirmation cards.

Yet what sets her apart isn't simply her medium, but her ability to fold narratives into her work. Through illustrated reflections, she offers stories that Malaysians in particular can resonate with, such as those about nostalgia, mental health and cultural identity.

Many of her illustrations are either Malaysian-centric or in support of a cause, often poetic in nature, which can be seen in many of her works. It's this gentle layering of mood, metaphor and introspection that allows her art to transcend language.

> **Art should be part of daily life, not something that only belongs in galleries."**
>
> Afi




A limited edition art print by Afi.

Creating in Malaysia's art ecosystem

While creatives in Malaysia often face systemic limitations – be it lack of funding, infrastructure or mainstream recognition, Afi remains hopeful.

"It's actually really fun being creative in Malaysia because of the growing art community. Everyone supports and motivates each other as creatives, so you don't really feel the pressure of competition," she shared.

"I believe Malaysia has an amazing pool of creatives in the industry. The creative talents are not only diverse, but I'm especially in awe when creatives can assimilate both local tradition and culture into their art with their own twist."

Her sentiments echo the broader reality of Malaysia's art scene, where younger generations of artists are finding ways to merge contemporary styles with traditional roots. This resurgence is evident in the reinterpretations of batik, as well as in digital doodles inspired by folklore or comics that reference Malaysian idioms and food culture.

However, Afi also believes more should be done at a structural level.

"The Malaysian creative industry should be further nurtured with help from the government and society because it's important to realise that art appreciation goes hand in hand with art education. It spreads awareness, considering art can bring happiness in everyday life."

Indeed, data from the Department of Statistics Malaysia show that the arts, entertainment and recreation sector contributes around 1.2% to the national GDP. While this number might seem small, its value to cultural development and social cohesion is immeasurable.

Championing mental health through art

With many young Malaysians navigating uncertain futures in a fast-paced digital world, the country is seeing a gradual increase in mental health issues among them. According to the Malaysian Youth Mental Health Index, a significant number of youths aged 18 to 30 report feeling overwhelmed, lonely and creatively blocked.

For Afi, art is both a sanctuary and an outlet. It allows her to slow down and invites others to do the same. One of her most beloved contributions to the creative scene is her accessible art classes. Afi welcomes everyone into a gentle and encouraging space through her art class, which is currently ongoing every alternate Wednesday and organised by Mental Illness Awareness and Support Association, Malaysia.

Her class captures a warm, communal moment – students scattered around with sketchbooks and brushes, immersed in creativity under Afi's nurturing guidance. She describes the class as "a safe space of artistic self-expression," emphasising a supportive environment where participants can explore ideas freely without judgement. This approach reflects her belief in the power of art as both a personal journey and shared experience, reinforcing her commitment to fostering an inclusive artistic community in Malaysia.

According to a 2022 study by Universiti Putra Malaysia, engaging in creative practices such as journalling, painting or storytelling significantly improves mental health outcomes among Malaysian youths. Yet, many still hesitate to explore these outlets due to stigma or lack of access. Afi hopes this will change with time.

"Art should be part of daily life, not something that only belongs in galleries," she said.

Looking ahead

Through workshops, collaborative projects and pop-up events, Afi frequently connects with many people, including younger artists and students. Her presence in the scene has undoubtedly encouraged many to take their creative impulses seriously. It's a reminder that creativity doesn't need grandeur – it needs sincerity.

Afi's plans include working on longer visual narratives, her latest one being a book titled Malaysian Food Tales. Through her vibrant and whimsical style of illustrations, the book tells a collection of stories in slow-paced, meditative and deeply rooted ways.

"I want to keep creating at my own rhythm and hopefully offer others a space to breathe through my art," she said.

As Malaysia continues to redefine its identity through art, culture and technology, creatives like Afi Sulaiman remind us that there's value in the quiet and the tender. In a society that often prioritises speed and scale, her work offers a gentle rebellion – one that celebrates nuance, connection and care.


Students are immersed in creativity during art classes.

How to support local creatives

- Attend pop-up events or local art markets like Riuh, Art for Grabs or Kedai KL.
- Follow illustrators on platforms like Behance and Instagram.
- Buy zines, prints, stickers or any merchandise directly from artists.
- Support community-led art spaces like The Zhongshan Building or REXKL.
- Encourage local councils and schools to fund art workshops and exhibitions.





The trouble with good intentions

We mean well when we adopt. But pets with trauma, medical needs or behavioural issues require more than warm feelings – they need unwavering presence

BY **CECELIA FONG**

THERE'S something deeply appealing about the idea of rescue. It paints a beautiful story: You saved a life. You gave an animal a second chance. You're a good person. And you probably are. But sometimes, adoption is treated like a moral accessory – a feel-good act with little reflection about long-term consequences. It becomes more about how the act is perceived than the reality that follows.

In urban centres like Kuala Lumpur and Penang, animal adoption drives have become as familiar as weekend bazaars. Pop-up booths and well-meaning volunteers often draw in passers-by who, moved by the stories or the eyes of a trembling dog, make an impulsive decision to adopt. The emotional pull is strong. The pressure to "do good" is subtle, but very real.

Yet rescuing is not the same as raising. The moment of rescue is only a doorway – not the home beyond it. That initial act of kindness does not automatically translate into a lifetime of care, nor does it guarantee understanding, patience or the willingness to adapt.

Too often, adoption is romanticised as a redemptive arc – for both the pet and the person. You sign the papers, post a photo with the hashtag AdoptDon'tShop and feel like you've crossed the finish line. But really, you're only at the starting blocks.

The reality is far messier. That dog with trauma may never be "normal". That cat, once familiar with cruelty, may never enjoy being touched. That senior dog might come with vet bills, arthritis and occasional accidents on your newly mopped floor.

They don't need a saviour. They need a carer – someone who will wake up early, clean messes without resentment and accept that gratitude might never look the way you imagined.

Healing doesn't follow a timeline. Not every story ends with the animal curled at your feet in perfect peace. Yet, the quiet victories – the first tail wag, the first time they eat without fear – are far more meaningful than any social media applause.

It's not about heroism ... it's about showing up

In Malaysia, adopting a rescue animal isn't always straightforward. Many animals up for adoption are strays or mixed breeds with unknown histories. Some have lived their entire lives outdoors. Others have survived car accidents, illnesses or abuse. Rehabilitation can take months – sometimes years. Behavioural challenges can push even the most patient owners to their limits.

Adoption centres, while doing meaningful work, sometimes oversell the experience in their desperation to find homes. They underplay the challenges, hoping the warmth of a home outweighs the risk of return. But when adopters are unprepared – emotionally, financially or logistically – the consequences can be severe. Pets are returned. Or worse, neglected behind closed doors.

Then there's the unspoken culture of guilt. In the rush to promote adoption, people who purchase pets – even responsibly, from ethical breeders – are often painted as morally inferior. But an adopted pet in a negligent home is not better off than a purchased one in a responsible, loving environment. Ethics matter. But so does readiness.

Are you doing it for them or for you?

The conversation shouldn't be about guilt. It should be about preparedness. About long-term capacity. Because the pet doesn't care how you found them, they care how you treat them – every day after.

Before adopting, it's worth asking: Am I doing this for the animal or for myself? Am I ready to build routines around their needs, not mine? Can I afford veterinary care if things go wrong? Do I have a plan if I travel, move or struggle with work–life balance? These are not deterrents. They're acts of kindness – the kind that begins before you bring the animal home.

None of this is meant to discourage adoption. Quite the opposite. When done with clarity, humility and commitment, adoption is one of the most beautiful things you can do. When you look at a scarred animal and say, "I see you. I choose you." When you adapt your life to accommodate theirs, not the other way around.

In Malaysia, such stories do exist. People have taken in blind cats, rescued senior dogs from drains or rehabilitated feral strays into loving companions. These aren't tales of heroism. They're stories of quiet, consistent effort. No hashtags. Just presence.

Adopting a pet doesn't make you a hero. Being there for that pet – every day, through tantrums, trauma and time – does.

So if you're considering adoption, take your time. Ask the tough questions. Prepare your home, your wallet and your heart because this isn't just about rescuing a life. It's about honouring it.

That, more than any moment of applause, is what truly makes you noble.



Being noble isn't about what you post on social media. It's about what you practise.

A quick gut check before you adopt

Adoption is more than a weekend decision. These questions aren't meant to scare you off – just to make sure you're stepping in with both eyes open.

- **Why now:** Is this a response to emotion or a carefully timed decision that fits your life?
- **What do I know about the animal:** Have I asked about medical history, temperament, past trauma or triggers?
- **Can I meet their needs consistently:** Do I have time, energy, backup care and financial room for the unexpected?
- **What's my plan if things get tough:** Will I invest in behavioural help or medical care or give up when it's hard?
- **Am I adopting for the animal or for me:** Would I still do this if no one ever praised me for it?

If you can answer honestly and still feel ready – go ahead. But if hesitation lingers, wait. Sometimes the kindest thing you can do is pause until you're truly prepared.

SCAN ME

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Perfected!

All-new Proton X50 fixes all issues of previous model and more

BY KESHY DHILLON

THE Proton X50 is undoubtedly the darling among Malaysians who want a medium sized SUV.

Over 140,000 X50's have been sold since 2020, cementing its reputation as one of the go-to models for Malaysians.

The SUV has made quite a reputation for itself as a reliable, comfortable and easy to live with machine. An ideal partner for those who want just one car for their daily routine as well as to accommodate the needs of their family.

Building on this, Proton introduced the new X50 just a few months ago. It has several updates that arguably warrant the use of the word "all-new", something that Proton has been harping on while some media outlets refuse to acknowledge.

The refusal stems from the fact that the underpinnings as well as some of the oily bits have been carried over from the previous X50.



Ethereal bow grille adds a touch of elegance.



Spoiler looks aggressive



LED headlights have three DRL's that are similar to the S70.



New four-cylinder engine is smooth and quiet.



Genuine quad pipes.



Flagship variant gets new 18-inch wheels.

However, I feel that Proton is entirely justified to use that word because the latest X50 is not just a facelift, but it offers an entirely new interior, new design and even a new engine.

So, in this article, I will share everything that the "all-new" X50 offers, the good as well as the bad about the car.

THE DESIGN

One of the major talking points of the X50 during the launch was the design. It left fans and observers divided, some liked it and some did not.

But that is usually the case with designs, it will never appeal to everyone and is always subjective.

The X50 though is not an original Proton design, it shares some of its styling with the Geely Binyue L, it's Chinese cousin.

The front is all new and that large gape under the grille is one of the main points that has divided observers.

I do have to agree that there's too much open space there, but there's nothing a body kit developed in Sunway cannot fix.

The lights too have been updated, new LED headlights replace the old projectors, while the three daytime running lights keeps it within the family as it looks similar to the ones on the S70.

Capping off the front is a uniquely Proton grille with the "ethereal bow" strip that Proton's design team has been quite proud of, and for good reason.

But I must ask the design team – what is up with those fake vents on the redesigned bonnet? It is 2025 already, fake vents belong in 1998.

The side profile is also new, with a seemingly longer A-pillar giving the car a more aggressive look.

The side has also been split into two, particularly for the Flagship variant, which is what this review is based on.

For the Flagship model, the upper part of the side profile gets a black roof, while the bottom half offers a more pronounced shoulder line as well as black plastic body panels with what seems to be aerodynamic vents. It is uncertain if those vents play any purpose, but they do look good.

The rear is entirely new as well. I particularly like the taillights with LED light strip across the boot, and the rear also sports the one part that is not fake, the quad tailpipes.

THE INTERIOR

Despite its looks, this is the one part that is entirely Proton's brainchild. I know what the looks suggest because every car that comes out of China seems to have one gigantic infotainment system, a small instrument cluster, and not much else.

So, while the design may not be all that original, but it is in line with Proton's newer models such as the e.MAS 7 and the upcoming e.MAS 5 (yes, I have driven it), keeping it very much in the family.

I must mention though that it is much better than what the looks suggest. Quality feels top notch, ergonomics are spot on, and there are features in here which you will never find in more expensive cars that simply make a lot of sense on Malaysian roads.

This feature is the semi-transparent sun visor that helps keep glare to a minimum, something like the sunshades that pilots use in an aircraft cabin. This has been carried over from the Geely Binyue L, but still a very cool touch.

Back to the business ends of things – the infotainment system measures in at a gargantuan 14.6-inches with wireless Apple Carplay and Android Auto. While that is nothing new, the Bahasa Melayu voice control system is a nice touch.

Proton says that it took them over 330,000 man hours to develop the voice command system, and just to ensure it works everywhere in Malaysia, it can understand four dialects, including the notoriously difficult Kelantanese dialect.

What I like about the interior is that it offers hard buttons for air-conditioning controls (though the on-screen adjustability is surprisingly easy even when driving), and the centre console has been freed of clutter because the gear selector has been moved to the steering column.

This simple update has allowed the engineers/designers to incorporate things like cup holders, the aforementioned hard buttons for the air-condition, and even twin phone holders with one Qi wireless charger.

Some netizens have remarked that the steering column shifter can be accidentally mistaken for the indicator stalk and thus shifting from Drive to Reverse. I have tried it; it does not work and the most that it goes to is Neutral.

Even then it can very easily shift back to Drive and there is no chance of the gearbox exploding as some have suggested.

But besides that, the interior remains largely the same. I appreciate the massive panoramic roof, the seats are also the same as before, which means a touch of softer padding would have made them more comfortable over long distances.

Spaciousness all around is as decent as before as is the boot space, which despite its generosity, houses a space saver spare wheel.

THE ENGINE

You could almost feel a collective sigh of relief from fans of the X50 when Proton announced that it was ditching the old three-cylinder engine for a four-cylinder unit.

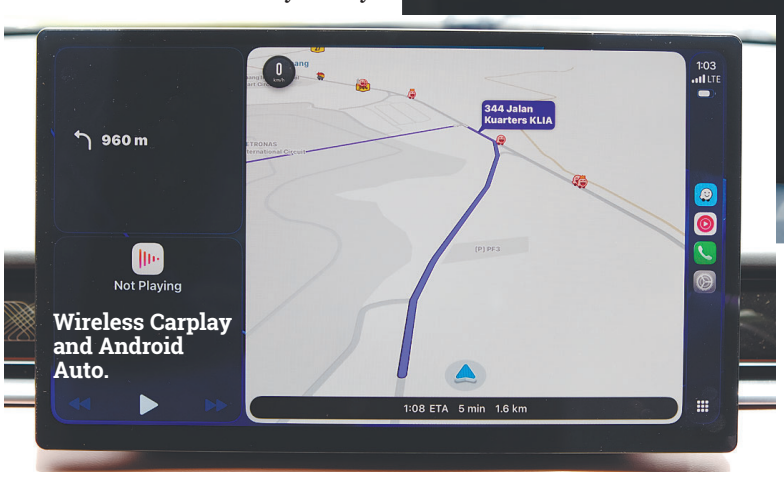
Not like there was anything wrong with the old engine, it's just that it sounded like a diesel engine, quivered oddly during start up and shut down, and was not very smooth at times. The new engine solves all those supposed issues.

The 1.5-litre displacement is the same as before, and it is also turbocharged as well, and slightly more powerful with 181PS and 290Nm of torque. That's 4PS and 35Nm more than before and allows a 0-100kph time of 7.6 seconds.

Power is sent to the front wheels through the same seven-speed dual-clutch transmission.

What is rather impressive is the fact that despite the engine gaining one extra cylinder, which in theory should make the engine thirstier since there is one extra mouth to feed, the truth is quite the opposite, in fact fuel consumption is down by 4.7%.

The timing belt has also been swapped with a timing chain, which supposedly makes it more robust over the long term.





Gear selector has been moved to the steering column ala Mercedes-Benz.

THE DRIVE

As you could probably imagine, it is a lot smoother than the previous model thanks to that one additional cylinder.

I have never been a fan of three-cylinder engines as they always seem to be off balance and make an uninspiring rattle.

But not here, the X50 comes with four driving modes – Eco, Normal, Sport and a new Adaptive mode.

The latter learns your driving style and adapts to it accordingly, I just left it in adaptive for most of my drive to Melaka and back.

The suspension is firm yet comfortable while refinement is surprisingly decent, until you hit upwards of 110kph. After that point, you begin to hear some roar from the Continental tyres and some hint of the wind hitting the screen.

But that's not a deal breaker, there are not many cars in this segment that remain quiet at that speed.

Once you get used to that, you will notice that the Proton X50 is more than happy to be cruising at about 140kph and can manage it all day without taking a toll on you.


The interior is entirely Proton's brainchild.


Steering wheel has been carried over from the previous model.

Adaptive cruise control with stop and go function is a nice touch as well and makes managing traffic a much simpler task.

FINAL VERDICT

I don't say this very often but the Proton X50 is one of the few cars that justifies a lateral move. If you own a previous generation X50 and want something new, the new X50 feels like a genuine trade up.

It can even make life difficult for the likes of the Honda HR-V, and with a price tag starting from RM89,800 all the way up to RM113,300, it feels like a true bargain considering everything you are getting.

It even comes with comprehensive list of active and passive safety systems including Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (Adas).

In fact, I am in awe of the fact that it comes with a feature called Door Opening Warning. You don't usually get this feature in this price category, and I can only think of the Chery Tiggo Cross Hybrid to have the same system.

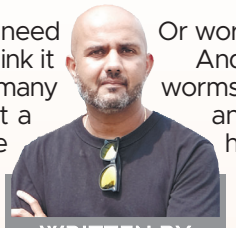
This warns you of oncoming obstacles when you want to open the door, so you don't accidentally hit a pedestrian, cyclist or worse, a motorcyclist.

At the current price tags (which is slightly cheaper than before), the new Proton X50 genuinely feels like a bargain.

SPECIFICATIONS

Engine: 1.5-litre, four-cylinder, turbocharged
Power: 181PS @ 5500rpm
Torque: 290Nm @ 2000rpm
Transmission: 7-speed, dual-clutch
Price (as tested): RM113,300
We like: Interior feel, smooth new engine.
We don't like: Some plastic design bits.

Will our driving data be kept safe?



WRITTEN BY KESHY DHILLON

BY the time this article goes to print, it would have been a month since *Budi95* was implemented. By now, all Malaysians, expats and foreigners here would be familiar with the targeted subsidy programme.

Though there are always naysayers, but after having tried pouring fuel at different petrol stations with varying systems, I feel that it is about time this system is implemented.

Targeted subsidies are much welcomed, and this also means that only Malaysians get to enjoy its. I like it that every fuel receipt now shows just how much the government pays for fuel subsidy.

I have to admit not knowing how much each tank was subsidised. Recently, I filled my wife's car which was nearly empty, and even though the pump showed I had poured RM114 worth of fuel, I only paid RM87. I must say that I am grateful.

And in the one month that it has been implemented, I have only used about 140 litres of the 300 litres allocated to me and to most Malaysians. E-hailing drivers get 600 litres, and rightfully so as they are on the road almost all day long.

I have come across some reports that say most Malaysians only need about 180 litres per month. I think it is way too early to tell how many litres each Malaysian needs, let a year or two pass, let the festive seasons come and go a few times and perhaps then we can get more reliable data.

On the topic of data, there is one thing that troubles me about the Budi95 programme, and that is my privacy.

Because I now have to provide my identity card every time I pour fuel, my whereabouts can easily be tracked if someone wanted to know where I am or study my driving pattern.

If I poured fuel in Johor Bahru, then travelled to Kelantan and refuelled again, someone somewhere can very easily know where I am and where I came from. That is something I don't appreciate.

Say that I drove faster than I am supposed to and refuelled in Kelantan in a mere five hours after leaving JB, the authorities will know that I have been speeding. Will I then be issued a ticket? Or worse, a court appearance letter?

And this opens a massive can of worms, who is managing this data and what guarantee do we have that this data will not be leaked, or worse, sold to marketing agencies?

Judging from the sheer number of daily calls and texts we get from companies and institutions offering loans, pretending to be someone they're not and telling us that we have unsettled court cases on a Sunday evening, I know our data is not 100% safe.

But this data also allows the government to track all of our consumption patterns. And this is something the big eye in the sky is actively tracking because the powers that be have already identified 80 individuals that only have motorcycles registered to their names but have used up the entirety of their 300 litres before the month has ended.

All 80 of these individuals live in states bordering our neighbours to the north. So while this is great for crime busting, this also shows us what the future holds.

Because all of our personal data is online and accessible anywhere, big brother knows what car or motorcycle we have, where we live, where we work, how much we earn, where we spend, where we refuel, and what we do. Our entire life is now on display, whether we like it or not.

And all of this will soon be used for a more refined subsidy rationalisation programme where some will pay more or less for fuel than the person standing next to us on the street.

I understand the overall gist of it but the government also has to ensure that targeted subsidies always remain fluid.

Our earnings may not always be the same and in the event that our salaries go down over some months, then the fuel subsidy should reflect that as well.

Now that the government has all the data they need, and as uncomfortable as I am with it all, we can only hope that the data is being stored and used in proper ways that benefit all of us rather than trouble us.

By the way, anyone know what happened to all of our data that was stored on the servers of *MySejahtera*?

Purring felines

Bookings open for new Ora Good Cats



GWM Malaysia has officially opened bookings for the new Ora Good Cat and the sportier Ora Good Cat GT, with prices starting from RM115,000.

First introduced to Malaysia in 2023, the Ora Good Cat was among the earliest fully electric hatchbacks from China to enter the local market.

Its combination of retro-inspired design, premium features, and practical driving range quickly made it popular among city-based EV buyers. The latest line-up builds on that success.

The updated Ora Good Cat now features refreshed styling and improved comfort, while the Ora Good Cat GT adds a sportier character and enhanced performance.

Both models continue GWM's "Extra Good EV" philosophy, combining design, technology, and safety in a more refined package.

The new cars showcases a design that balances contemporary flair with everyday usability. Its smooth and responsive drive is matched by an upgraded suite of safety systems and driver assistance technologies. GWM describes it as an EV that delivers "everything and a little extra," reflecting its goal of making electric mobility more rewarding and accessible.

The new Ora Good Cat is powered by a 57.7kWh SVOLT LFP battery, offering up to 480km of range (NEDC). It produces 143PS and 210Nm of torque.

Charging is supported via 60kW DC fast charging, allowing a 30–80% charge in about 38 minutes, while 6.6kW AC charging is available for home use.

Inside, it features leatherette seats, a 10.25-inch infotainment display, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, as well as Level 2 Adas and a 360° camera system. Estimated pricing is below RM115,000.

The sportier GT shares the same 57.7kWh battery but offers slightly less range at 460km (NEDC), due to its performance-tuned motor producing 171PS and 250Nm of torque.

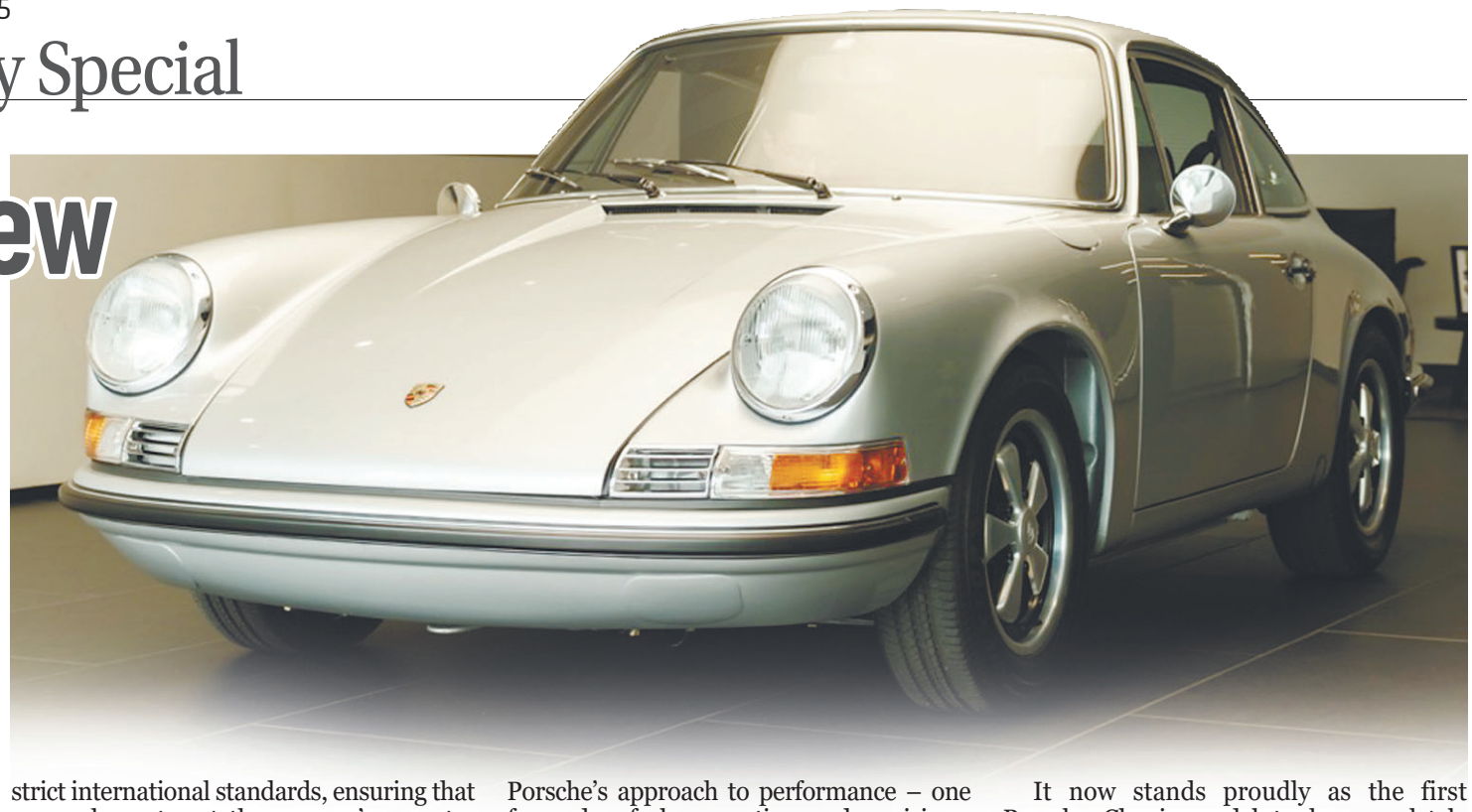
Design upgrades include a more aggressive front bumper, GT-specific alloy wheels, yellow brake callipers, and a rear spoiler.

The interior features GT sport seats with suede leather and yellow stitching, while Launch Control adds an extra touch of performance. Like the standard model, it includes Level 2 Adas, the My GWM app, and smartphone connectivity. Estimated pricing is below RM125,000.

Bookings are now open at all authorised GWM Malaysia showrooms nationwide and online via the official website at www.gwm.com.my. Customers can visit their nearest dealership for more details or to experience the new models in person.

Good as new

Porsche Malaysia completes first full classic 911 restoration



DEEP within the workshop of Porsche Centre Johor Bahru, a slice of motoring history has been reborn.

Porsche Malaysia has achieved a major milestone with the completion of its first full ground-up restoration of a classic 911 T, a project carried out entirely in-house by technicians trained and certified under the Porsche Classic Partner programme.

The result is more than just a restored car; it's a precise recreation of an automotive icon brought back to life with the same care and craftsmanship it received when it first left the factory.

The process was a painstaking one, driven by an obsession with authenticity.

Over many months, the team completely dismantled the car – every bolt, panel, and mechanical component was catalogued, refinished, and rebuilt to match the exact specifications outlined in Porsche's original factory documentation.

The restoration followed the brand's strict international standards, ensuring that every element met the marque's expectations for quality and historical accuracy.

First introduced in 1967, the Porsche 911 T – short for "Touring" – served as the entry model in the 911 line-up.

It may not have carried the high output of the 911 S or 911 E, but it shared the same unmistakable design and engineering DNA that would come to define the 911's enduring legend.

Lightweight, balanced, and engaging to drive, the 911 T captured the purity of Porsche's approach to performance – one focused on feel, connection, and precision.

The restored car in Johor Bahru had seen decades of use before it was entrusted to the skilled hands of Porsche Malaysia's Classic Partner team.

What emerged from the workshop is a car restored to near-original condition, from its gleaming bodywork to the smallest interior details.

Every surface, seam, and switch reflects a level of craftsmanship that mirrors Porsche's own production ethos.

It now stands proudly as the first Porsche Classic model to be completely rebuilt from the ground up on Malaysian soil – a first for the country and a testament to Porsche's growing commitment to supporting its heritage here.

For the technicians behind the project, this restoration is more than just a display of skill — it's a statement of intent.

The successful revival of this 911 T marks the beginning of a new chapter for Malaysia's classic car scene, one where local expertise meets global heritage.



Volvo completes 2026 line-Up

VOLVO Car Malaysia has wrapped up its transition to the 2026 model year, refreshing its entire line-up following the introduction of the updated XC60 and the new single-motor EC40.

The move reinforces Volvo's direction towards an electrified future while giving Malaysian buyers more choices across its premium SUV and electric vehicle range.

The refreshed XC60, which made its debut in September, now offers updated styling, new features, and improved comfort.

Available in two variants, the XC60 T8 AWD plug-in hybrid is priced from RM362,888, while the XC60 B5 AWD mild hybrid starts at RM328,888.

The plug-in hybrid version combines strong performance with practicality, offering up to 89km of pure electric driving range on a single charge – ideal for daily commutes with zero tailpipe emissions.

With over 450Nm of torque, it delivers a smooth yet energetic drive.

The mild-hybrid B5 variant provides a more traditional setup with a 2.0-litre turbocharged engine paired with an integrated starter-generator, delivering seamless acceleration without the need for external charging.

For 2026, the Volvo EC40 – the brand's first electric-only crossover SUV – adds a new single-motor variant to complement the existing twin-motor version.

Priced at RM248,888, this new model features a rear-mounted electric motor producing 238hp and completing the 0–100 kph sprint in 7.3 seconds.

Its 70kWh battery offers up to 488km of driving range (WLTP), and it supports DC fast charging that can bring the battery from 10% to 80% in just 26 minutes.

The XC90, Volvo's flagship SUV, also receives subtle updates for 2026, further enhancing its luxurious and modern appeal. The new Aurora Silver exterior finish adds a fresh look to the range, which also includes Onyx Black, Denim Blue, and Crystal White.

Two variants are available: the XC90 Ultra T8 Plug-in Hybrid priced at RM434,888, which produces 462hp and 709Nm while returning just 1.8L/100km, and the XC90 Ultra B5 Mild Hybrid priced at RM418,888, generating 249hp and 350Nm. Both come with all-wheel drive and an eight-speed Geartronic transmission.



Toyota previews bold Corolla Concept

TOYOTA has unveiled a striking new interpretation of the Corolla, offering a glimpse into the next evolution of the popular nameplate.

Revealed during a livestream event in Japan that also featured a six-wheeled Lexus LS minivan and a raised Century coupe, the Corolla concept stood out as one of the most intriguing debuts of the showcase.

Although officially labelled a concept, several cues suggest that this new Corolla is close to production readiness.

Traditional side mirrors, for instance, hint at a practical rather than purely experimental design.

More notably, the presence of a fuel cap on the front fender points to an electric powertrain – though Toyota has yet to confirm whether it's a fully electric model or a plug-in hybrid.

An electric version of the Corolla seems almost inevitable, given Toyota's gradual but deliberate expansion into EVs.

However, it's difficult to imagine the brand abandoning combustion power entirely for such a globally significant nameplate.

The Corolla remains central to Toyota's global sales, and with the company's ongoing belief that full electrification will not dominate every market, internal combustion variants are expected to remain part of the lineup for years to come.

Toyota has so far withheld technical details, leaving observers to speculate on what lies beneath the concept's sharp exterior.

One scenario could see this EV variant sold alongside a petrol-powered twin with nearly identical styling – a strategy already used by Lexus for the new ES, which looks largely the same in both hybrid and electric form.

Alternatively, Toyota may position this futuristic design as the electric face of the Corolla, while keeping the combustion model more conventional. Visually, the concept signals a clear shift in design philosophy. It moves away from the conservative lines of the current generation and embraces a bolder aesthetic.

The car will make its full debut at the 2025 Japan Mobility Show, opening to the press on Oct 29.

Solve The Phrase And Sudoku

#1

T _ T
F _ R
T _ T

Hint: Getting even

Letters Remaining = AIO

#2

D E E _ A _ A _ _

Hint: Festival of Lights

Letters Remaining = IVPL

#3

_ H E
L O _ V R E
H E _ _ _

Hint: 2025 jewellery theft

Letters Remaining = ISUT

#4

M C _ A R E _
_ O R M U _ A _
_ E A M

Hint: 2025 F1 Constructors' champion

Letters Remaining = LNFT

#5

_ _ D Y
G _ G _

Hint: MTV's Artiste of the Year 2025

Letters Remaining = LA

#6

A U S _ _ _ N _ S _ A N
_ A N G U A G _ S

Hint: Southeast Asian language group

Letters Remaining = OLTIER

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GIANTS VS TITANS
Gamification for a better planet from FIRST RAY

Answers will be uploaded on Sunday, November 2 @ thesun.my/puzzles

Your weekend horoscope


Not all water placements are beneficial and where it is placed matters more than whether it simply exists.

ARIES
March 21 – April 19
Your drive and determination give you the push to take action, and make progress. People around you may look for your guidance, and your direct approach helps things move forward. Confidence works best when balanced with patience, rushing may lead to small mistakes. Honest communication clears confusion.

TAURUS
April 20 – May 20
Your calm and practical nature helps you stay steady when others feel unsettled. Work or home responsibilities may need extra focus, but you handle them best by taking one step at a time. A careful look at finances or personal plans can bring clarity, and peace of mind. Small gestures of care deepen trust.

GEMINI
May 21 – June 20
Your curious and lively spirit makes this a good time for learning, connecting, and sharing ideas. Conversations bring clarity, and someone's insight could spark an exciting thought or plan. Staying focused on a few goals helps prevent scattered energy. Your humour and lightheartedness brighten the mood, but listening builds stronger understanding.

CANCER
Your gentle nature shines through as you care for others and create harmony around you. Home, family or close friendships may take up more attention, and small moments of warmth can bring lasting peace. You may feel emotionally sensitive, so protect your energy by setting healthy limits.

LEO
July 23 – Aug 22
Your confidence and warmth draw people towards you, making it easier to take the lead in personal and group settings. Creative energy flows easily, helping you express yourself with charm and enthusiasm. Be mindful not to take on more than you can handle.

VIRGO
Aug 23 – Sept 22
Your thoughtful mindset helps you stay on top of tasks and plans. This is a good time to focus on small details that make a big difference. Others value your advice, though it is wise not to overextend yourself. Progress feels smooth when you stay patient instead of pushing too hard.

LIBRA
Sept 23 – Oct 22
Your natural grace makes it easier to connect with people and keep harmony in your surroundings. Fair communication helps smooth out differences and brings understanding where there was tension. You may feel drawn to beauty, comfort or art that brings calm to your mind.

SCORPIO
Oct 23 – Nov 21
Your determination and emotional depth help you see beyond surface issues and find lasting solutions. You may feel more reflective, wanting to understand yourself and others more deeply. Honest conversations bring clarity, and trust strengthens through openness. It is easier to stay balanced when you take quiet time to recharge.

SAGITTARIUS
Nov 22 – Dec 21
Your outlook brings excitement. New ideas or connections may inspire you to try something different or plan for the future. People enjoy your optimistic energy, and your enthusiasm helps motivate them too. Just be careful not to take on too many projects at once. Honest communication deepens relationships.

CAPRICORN
Dec 22 – Jan 19
Your focus and discipline help you handle challenges with confidence. Responsibilities may feel heavy, but your steady approach allows you to manage them without losing direction. Recognition could come from your hard work, and your reliability strengthens trust with others.

AQUARIUS
Jan 20 – Feb 18
Your original thinking helps you find creative solutions and see opportunities where others might not. Group projects or friendships bring inspiration and support, while time alone helps you reflect and recharge. Stay flexible when unexpected situations arise.

PISCES
Feb 19 – March 20
Your gentle and intuitive energy helps you sense what people need before they say it. This makes you a source of comfort and understanding for others. Creative activities or quiet moments can help you stay calm and centred. Be mindful not to take on too much of others' emotions.

Pool in front

Is it good or bad *feng shui*?

IN *feng shui*, water is a powerful symbol. It represents wealth *(cai)*, flow and opportunities. So, it is no surprise many homeowners feel confident placing a swimming pool in front of the house.

After all, water equals prosperity, right? Not quite. The truth is, not all water placements are beneficial and where it is placed matters more than whether it simply exists.

In classical *feng shui*, the ideal location for external water such as pools, ponds or fountains depends on the property's facing direction, landform and energetic layout.

A well-placed pool can indeed enhance wealth and opportunity. But when it is incorrectly positioned – especially in the front, it can disturb stability, drain personal resources or even weaken health and relationships.

One common mistake is placing a large swimming pool directly in front of the main door. While it may look luxurious, this setup can symbolically "drain" the home's *qi* before it even enters.

In practical terms, it could show up as inconsistent income, poor focus or projects that never quite get off the ground.

Worse, if the pool is built too close to the front entrance, it creates a *yin* imbalance, bringing in too much water energy and suppressing the vital *yang* needed to support motivation and daily momentum.

Another point to consider is symmetry. If the pool is off-centre or built only on one side of the house (especially the right side from inside looking out), it could symbolically empower the wrong energies, leading to imbalances in family roles or authority in relationships.

The solution

If your pool is already in front of the house, make sure there is enough distance between the pool and the front door. You want to allow *qi* to gather and circulate before reaching the home, not rush in and get absorbed by the water. A curved pathway, plants, or low walls can help buffer and re-route the energy.

If you are building from scratch, consider consulting a *feng shui* expert to determine the best location for water features. Sometimes, water at the back left or front left is more suitable depending on your house's orientation and your personal *baZi*.

Because water is a double-edged sword. When it is right, it supports growth, cashflow and smooth progress. But when it is wrong, it drowns your momentum quietly, even as the surface looks calm.

***This** article is contributed by metaphysics researcher Daniel Siew. Discover more at www.danielsiew.com*

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No end to pain

I'll never get over 'brutal' Ryder Cup defeat, says Bradley



Team USA captain Keegan Bradley (front, left) speaks with Sam Burns (front, right) on the 8th hole during the 2025 Ryder Cup at Bethpage Black Golf Course, Farmingdale, New York on Sept 27. – *REUTERSPIC*

BY LUKE BAKER

KEEGAN BRADLEY has admitted he doesn't expect to ever get over leading Team USA to a shock Ryder Cup defeat on home soil last month, saying the event has always been "brutal" to him.

The 39-year-old was the youngest captain since Arnold Palmer in 1963 but he oversaw a disastrous campaign that ended with Team Europe winning 15-13 at Bethpage Black – the first away victory for either team since 2012.

Europe raced into a 5½-2½ lead on the opening day and extended that to 11½-4½ by the end of day two – the biggest lead going into the final day in modern Ryder Cup history.

The US fought back in the singles on Sunday, and looked like they may snatch victory at one point, but had ultimately left themselves too much to do as Bradley was forced to accept he made some wrong decisions around pairings and course set-up.

"Since Bethpage, this has been one of the toughest times in my life," said Bradley at the media day for the Travelers Championship, where he is the defending champion.

"You win, it's glory for a lifetime – but I didn't and I'm going to have to sit with this for the rest of my life.

"There's no part of me that thinks I'll ever get over this. This event has been so brutal to me."

The US won 8½ points from the 12 singles matches on Sunday but the hole they had dug themselves was too great and Bradley acknowledges he was shell-shocked after a disastrous opening two days.

"You put so much into it, and you have all this planning, and the first two days went as poorly as we could have ever thought," he added. "It was pretty emotional. It was sad, to be honest."

There was controversy ahead of the Ryder Cup around Bradley's decision not to select himself to play as a wildcard, after he only narrowly missed out on automatic qualification.

He has made no secret of his desperation to play in another Ryder Cup after suffering defeat on his appearances in 2012 and 2014, before not being selected by Zach Johnson in 2023 despite being in great form.

He still retains that playing goal and wavered on his decision not to pick himself at points during the week at Bethpage before accepting it was the right call.

"I really would enjoy playing in one more. I don't know if I'll get the chance," added Bradley, who will now try to qualify for the next Ryder Cup at Adare Manor in Ireland in September 2027.

"This effing event has been so brutal to me. I don't know if I want to play… No, I do. It's such a weird thing to love something so much that just doesn't give you anything.

"I'll forever wonder and wish that I had a chance to play there (at Bethpage). The first practice day, I was out on the tee, and I was watching the guys walk down the fairway all together, and I said: 'I wish I was playing. That's what it's all about. I'm missing out.'

"By the second or third day I was like 'It's a good thing I'm not playing,' because I was so physically exhausted

"Good thing I didn't do it, because it would have been bad. I just didn't think I could do both jobs."

Despite the frustrating result, Bradley admitted he was humbled by the experience of being Ryder Cup captain in the year before the event.

"I didn't expect the support from the fans," explained Bradley.

"In the history of the game – back to Bobby Jones, Tiger Woods, Jack Nicklaus – I don't know if any of them got to experience what I experienced this year.

"I got to experience something in the game of golf that I don't think anyone's ever experienced: where I'm the Ryder Cup captain but also competing at a very high level, and winning tournaments, and contending in tournaments. And it was really incredible." – The Independent



Down to the wire

Piastri vs Norris vs Verstappen – where 2025 F1 title race will be won and lost

BY KIERAN JACKSON

THE battle for the 2025 F1 drivers' title is heating up and with five rounds remaining this season, it's now a three-horse race.

Oscar Piastri's lead has been whittled down in recent weeks and his advantage over McLaren teammate Lando Norris is now just 14 points, having gone three races without a podium finish.

Yet storming up behind both papaya drivers is Red Bull's Max Verstappen, chasing a fifth consecutive championship.

The Dutchman, from a deficit of 104 points in August, is now just 40 off Piastri with 141 points still to play for.

Verstappen has won three of the last four races, while McLaren last won a grand prix in Zandvoort in August.

Momentum has shifted in Red Bull's favour, with plenty of pundits now backing Verstappen to complete an unprecedented comeback.

Despite Verstappen's form, McLaren look resolutely set to continue their policy of not making one of their drivers the clear No 1.

But where could the title be won or lost? Here's an evaluation of the next five races, who it favours and the permutations at play as the 2025 season reaches its finale.

MEXICO CITY GP (Oct 24-26)

Verstappen is the favourite here. Not only does he have a formidable record at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez – he has won the race five times – but the 1.2km start-finish straight favours a Red Bull car which has unlocked speed in a straight-line in recent races.

Verstappen's dominance in Monza last month, with that historically long straight, highlights the RB21's improvement, with a new floor providing significantly more downforce and allowing the engineers to unlock more performance, with various setup options catered to the Dutchman's aggressive, front-limited style of driving.

With momentum firmly on his side too, Verstappen will take some stopping. However, after a wretched few weeks, McLaren and championship leader Oscar Piastri simply need to find some consistency again.

The car is not suddenly slower; it can still compete with Red Bull. Yet both Piastri and Norris are making small mistakes in qualifying, which is making all the difference to their grid positions.

For the Australian, consistent podiums could well be enough. That should be his target in Mexico, while Norris still needs to gamble more and take the fight to Verstappen.

Last year, Verstappen received a mammoth 20-second penalty after forcing Norris off-track as the 2024 title race concluded. Will a similar show of hostility be witnessed here?

PREDICTION: Verstappen P1, Norris P2, Piastri P4.

BRAZILIAN GP (Nov 7-9)

Much like last year, this could be a game-changing weekend. Once again, the terrific Interlagos circuit will host a sprint race, with 33 points up for grabs over the course of the weekend.

Verstappen registering that maximum figure last time out in Austin thrust him firmly back into the title picture – could the same here see him leapfrog his rivals?

Verstappen should, once more, be the favourite. From his miraculous save in 2016 to the drive of his life from P17 to P1 last year, the Dutchman adores the variable weather conditions Sao Paulo often throws up. No doubt he and his Red Bull team will be doing the rain dance.

Contrastingly, this is where Norris's title challenge faded with a whimper last season. Has he learned from that experience? And how could it help him this time around?

Solace for McLaren lies in the track configurations. No extensively long straight and a series of slow corners should level the playing field car-wise. This event will be about who can limit mistakes.

PREDICTION: Verstappen P1 (sprint P2), Piastri P2 (sprint P3), Norris P3 (sprint P1).

LAS VEGAS GP (Nov 21-23)

The Sin City strip circuit – in its third iteration – could well be an outlier round.

In cool conditions, Mercedes dominated last year with George Russell leading a one-two finish.

The Silver Arrows will be right in the mix again this year, potentially throwing a spanner in the works for the three title rivals.

Verstappen, who sealed the title in Vegas last year, won the first race in 2023 and the 1.92km back straight should again favour the Red Bull car. How the tyres cope with the cool 12C conditions, however, will be a pivotal aspect to the whole weekend.

Norris crashed out of the inaugural race in Vegas two years ago and finished sixth last season, with Piastri only seventh. Both will need major improvements this time around.

PREDICTION: Verstappen P2; Norris P3; Piastri P4.

QATAR GP (Nov 28-30)

The final sprint weekend of the season – and likely the final venue for a major points swing, should it occur.

Alarmingly for McLaren, Verstappen has won the last two races at the Lusail International Circuit, which has several high-speed corners but is also known for high tyre wear, as illustrated by the mandatory three-stop rule in 2023.

Given there are no further upgrades this season, McLaren and Red Bull could be tighter than ever by the penultimate round. Warm conditions in the Middle East and a quick turn-around from Vegas – and a 12-hour time zone shift – are other factors at play, as the title race reaches boiling point.

PREDICTION: Norris P1 (sprint P3), Verstappen P2 (sprint P1), Piastri P3 (sprint P2).

ABU DHABI GP (Dec 5-7)

Put Sunday Dec 7 December in your calendars now; all evidence suggests that this three-horse race will go down to the final grand prix.

On paper, out of all the tracks remaining, the Yas Marina Circuit probably favours McLaren the most.

Norris won the race last year – sealing the 2024' constructors' title in the process – while Verstappen and Piastri collided at the start, with the Dutchman penalised.

It would be the first title-deciding final race since the infamous 2021 finale between Verstappen and Lewis Hamilton and those thrilling and controversial final few laps. Anything close to that level of drama this time around – and we're in for a treat.

PREDICTION: Norris P1, Verstappen P2, Piastri P3.

The Independent

Champions League top-eight finish big effort: Vicario

BY GEORGE SESSIONS

GUGLIELMO VICARIO knows it will take a "big effort" for Tottenham to finish in the Champions League top eight after Thursday's 0-0 draw at Monaco.

Spurs started their European campaign with a narrow 1-0 win over Villarreal, but back-to-back draws and below-par displays on the road at Bodo/Glimt and Monaco have left them 15th in the table.

With Thomas Frank's team set to visit holders Paris St Germain next month and with Borussia Dortmund coming to north London in January, Tottenham may need four wins from their last five league phase fixtures to secure direct entry into the last 16 via a top-eight finish.

"It would be the best option, of course and we will try," Vicario insisted.

"Eight out of 36 is not even the 25 per cent of teams. So, it is a big effort to do it.

"We will try, but the important thing is to be there, to stay there and to fight for this Champions League."

Asked if Spurs had struggled to adapt to Europe's elite competition after Vicario produced a string of saves at Stade Louis II, he said: "It depends always how you see things. I don't see it this way.

"In the Champions League we play two away games. It is always tough to get points and we manage to get two, so seeing it from this perspective, it is a good amount of points.

"Of course we manage to win against Villarreal. I think we played a good game and won 1-0 so it was enough. Now we have five more to play and we will try our best to get the maximum points."

Even though Vicario produced his best with three outstanding saves to deny Folarin Balogun and a wonderful point-black stop to thwart a header by Thilo Kehrer, he acknowledged it was a "bad game" from Tottenham.

Cristian Romero's absence made it 10 players unavailable, but Vicario refused to look for excuses before tomorrow's (12.30am) trip to Everton.

"It was my day in terms of saves and helping the team," Vicario reflected.

"We are a group and everyone is aware of what he has to bring onto the pitch. It is not only down to me, down to Cuti, down to Micky (van de Ven).

"It is the responsibility of everyone and what we train for. Probably of course is a bad day, a bad game and we will review it because I think it is a big learning for us." – The Independent



Spurs keeper Guglielmo Vicario. – *REUTERSPIC*

Unfinished business

Fernandez rejected advances over a transfer in pursuit of winning trophies with Manchester United

BY RICHARD JOLLY

BRUNO FERNANDES *(pic)* is talking hundreds and millions. When he led Manchester United out against Brighton this morning, the captain became the 63rd player to make 300 appearances for the club.

He has brought up the landmark in under six years but the man who ranks as both United's best signing and best player since Sir Alex Ferguson retired is a personal success story amid a wider malaise.

"I want to be recognised by the many good things I did for the club, that I've brought something back to the club, not just my individual numbers," said Fernandes.

At times, his have felt like doomed heroics, a man single-handedly trying to avert decline at Old Trafford.

But when United endured their worst season in half a century, Fernandes was offered the most lucrative of escape routes.

He could have had a remarkably lucrative reunion with his Portugal skipper Cristiano Ronaldo and his former Sporting CP manager Jorge Jesus at Al-Hilal. And he chose to stay at a club who finished 15th last year.

Fernandes is swift to say that he is scarcely a pauper at United, but it was a notable display of loyalty nonetheless.

"The offer was very good in terms of salary," he said. "Everything was massive for me. I had the conversations with Al-Hilal. Everyone knows that."

Fernandes talked to Ronaldo and Jesus, but he also spoke to United chief executive Omar Berrada, director of football Jason Wilcox and manager Ruben Amorim.

They gave him permission to go but left him in no doubt their preference was to keep him.

Fernandes explained: "Jason said, like Omar said, 'We won't say no but obviously we want you to stay at the club. But if you want to go, we won't say that it's not a good offer for us, because it's massive money' – £80-100 million (RM464m-580m). They were more than eager to pay.

"I always said that if the club was like 'Bruno, we want to cash in, you are 30 years old. We want to make some money. We don't think you can be part of the future project' or whatever, I would be like, 'OK and I will leave'. But obviously that wasn't the case. I felt that I was still part of the plan."

On a personal level, Fernandes is content in Manchester. Some of his professional ambitions have gone unrealised, though. United have won the Carabao Cup and the FA Cup since his arrival in 2020, but not the bigger prizes.

United gave Fernandes a message he liked this year: rather than cashing in on him, they invested in players to ease the goalscoring burden on him.

"We needed to sign big characters," Fernandes said. "I think we brought in players that are very aware of the dimension of the club."

Perhaps the failings of previous teammates have cost Fernandes a wider recognition. Besides his 100 goals, he has 84 assists for the club.

Yet the individual honours and the places on the *Ballon d'Or* shortlist tend to go to those who have won more prestigious trophies and played in better sides.

"Probably people will say, 'yeah, Bruno's doing very well'," reflected Fernandes. "But that's not what I want.

"Obviously, I want people to say good things about me – but I want the team achievements, because that will be massive for me also, it will make me, in the eyes of people, be a better player also."

And arguably he put that quest for collective achievements at United above his bank balance in his thinking.

"Money is important to everyone in life, so I would be lying (if I said not)," Fernandes added. "But I'm not in a position where I should be counting my money or having problems in the future if I do things right.

"I'm not struggling, I'm not someone that has spent all the money that I've earned through the years.

"And when I finish my career, I just want a relaxed life in my house, going to the coffee shop sometimes with my father."

If Fernandes should be able to afford to pay for those coffees, his eventual retirement should be cushioned by the knowledge he gave everything to the United cause. Even after he was offered a fortune to go. – The Independent

Nuno worried by Hammers' plight

West Ham yet to win a game since replacing Potter

BY MARK WALKER


Nuno Espirito Santo. – REUTERSPIC

WEST HAM boss Nuno Espirito Santo said he and his players face a "big, big challenge" to keep the club in the Premier League after yesterday's 2-1 defeat at Leeds left them in the bottom three.

The Hammers have made their joint-worst start to a season, four points from their first nine fixtures, after early goals from Leeds pair Brenden Aaronson and Joe Rodon left them chasing the game.

Substitute Mateus Fernandes' last-minute header reduced the deficit, but Nuno's side failed to create further openings and the Portuguese's winless start as West Ham head coach extended to four games.

Nuno said after the Londoners' seventh League defeat of the season: "I'm worried since I arrived, so it's not something that surprises me.

"We are worried, but we are committed and embrace the challenge that we have ahead – it's a big one, a big, big one."

Aaronson turned in a rebound after goalkeeper Alphonse Areola had parried Noah Okafor's header in the third minute and Rodon headed home from Sean Longstaff's 15th-minute corner.

Nuno said: "We started very bad again, very bad. The way we defended was bad. We improved in the second half, but it was not enough.

"(We have) concerns over so many things, our approach, individual duals, defensive tasks, our confidence. So many things, so many things."

When asked if there was enough in the dressing room to turn the situation around, he added: "Yes, there's enough, and there's time. But it only can be possible if we change immediately."

Leeds put back-to-back defeats to Tottenham and Burnley behind them to secure their third League win of the season, climbing up to 13th in the table ahead of the weekend's fixtures.

Farke said he was delighted with his players after securing "a priceless" three points after a "difficult week" due to illness and injury in the camp.

"You could feel that first reaction in the dressing room, they were relieved, but also unbelievably exhausted, because also the mental pressure that these young lads had to handle in the last few weeks was massive," Farke said.

"We also spoke self-critically about the final one or two per cent that we have to add in order to dig in and grind out results.

"And this is what we did today after such a difficult week. So this will do wonders for the confidence, and will be priceless, really, for our belief and team spirit.

"A third win after nine game-days already. It's pretty good for a newly promoted side, and for that it's a priceless win for us." – The Independent

Rodri not ready for Villans

PEP GUARDIOLA confirmed that Rodri is still not fit enough to return to the Manchester City team and that Nico Gonzalez was a doubt for today's (10pm Malaysian time) trip to Aston Villa.

The 29-year-old midfielder has been absent from City's side since the international break having picked up an injury during the 1-0 victory over Brentford at the beginning of October.

Rodri has missed two matches, against Everton in the Premier League and Villarreal in the Champions League, with Guardiola offering no updates on the timescale of his recovery.

"The guys who were not able (to play) against Villareal are still not ready," he admitted during yesterday's pre-match press conference.

Gonzalez has been filling in for Rodri in the anchor role at the base of City's midfield but he was substituted off on the hour mark against Villarreal with Mateo Kovacic replacing him.

Guardiola revealed that his availability for the Villa clash is in doubt and the club will see how he fares over the next couple of days.

"I didn't see the doctors, we'll see today and tomorrow how he feels," explained the City boss. "It was something with his feet."

Man City have won five of their eight League matches so far and have jumped up to second in the table just three points behind Arsenal.

Guardiola was asked if City are now the favourites to challenge the Gunners for the title but he feels it is still too soon to be sure.

"In the first two, three games we were done," Guardiola said. "I'll tell you that we will be back, I've said many times that the pundits, the specialists, the former footballers know what's going to happen after five games, I'm not able to do that.

"Ten, 15 games to know what's going on. Liverpool and Arsenal are there, someone else will be there and hopefully we can be there."

Guardiola also provided some insight into today's fixture calling Unai Emery's side "a complete team".

City have not won at Villa Park since December 2021 with two defeats and a draw from their last three meetings there.

"They were much better than us at the two fixtures we played at Villa Park," Guardiola admitted about City's upcoming opponents.

"Hopefully it will be different on Sunday. The admiration I have for Unai (Emery) is so high, consistent and well-prepared.

"Defensively really good, set-pieces also and after that they've improved a lot over the last years. With the keeper they have it's difficult to control the pressing.

"They bring a lot of players in the middle, the connection is really good, they break the lines and when that happens they are so, so quick.

"A really complete team… One of the toughest away games we'll have all season." – The Independent

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1st Prize	8137
2nd Prize	0348
3rd Prize	7555

Special		Consolation	
7081	6391	8463	6489
8536	8184	9654	5414
5039	9767	5879	9152
7447	0145	9488	0005
9451	3545	8254	5179

4D JACKPOT

Jackpot 1 RM 21,420,924.96

8137 0348	0348 8137
8137 7555	7555 8137
0348 7555	7555 0348

Jackpot 2 RM 292,330.50
Winning combination of any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of Special prizes.

4D Zodiac

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2nd Prize	0348	+
3rd Prize	7555	+
4th Prize	Special Prize	+
5th Prize	Consolation Prize	+
6th Prize	Any 4D drawn number	

TOTO 5D & 6D PRIZE PAYMENTS GUARANTEED IN FULL

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1st Prize	6720
2nd Prize	3689
3rd Prize	6501

Starters		Consolation	
7448	6769	1859	0961
1870	3530	5797	6510
6073	5282	6501	3582
3121	3143	1747	8209
4406	8685	6689	6005

1+3D Jackpot
Jackpot 1 RM5,110,704.10

6720 + 3689	3689 + 6720
6720 + 6501	6501 + 6720
3689 + 6501	6501 + 3689

Jackpot 2 RM100,540.30
Winning pair matches any 1 of Top 3 & any 1 of 10 Starter Prizes.

3+3D Bonus

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2nd Prize 693 689 +	Bonus GOAT	2nd Prize Bonus RM440,000.00
3rd Prize 326 501 +	Bonus SNAKE	3rd Prize Bonus RM609,097.10

Starters		Consolation	
327 448	956 769	141 859	270 961
391 870	553 530	665 797	306 510
656 073	095 282	066 501	213 582
293 121	073 143	081 747	098 209
694 406	078 685	766 689	896 005

3D

1st Prize	2nd Prize	3rd Prize
720	689	501

3D Jackpot
Jackpot RM793,090.30

720 + 689 + 501	689 + 501 + 720
720 + 501 + 689	501 + 720 + 689
689 + 720 + 501	501 + 689 + 720

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Hakin Danish hitches ride to Moto3

MALAYSIAN rider Muhammad Hakim Danish Ramli will be riding for MSI Racing Team and compete in the Moto3 class next season.

MSI Racing Team confirmed the development in a post on social media yesterday, ahead of today's Grand Prix (GP) Malaysia.

"Of course this news makes me happy and motivates me further for this weekend. I'm very excited to be part of Moto3 2026 with MSI. My dream has finally come true and I will give 100% next year.

"Thank you MSI, Jordi and Oscar, my sponsors, SIC Racing, ZK Racing Youth and Sports Ministry, Terengganu Inc and all my fans who believed in my career. Thank you very much," the 18-year-old said, thanking everyone who has helped him immensely throughout his racing career.

Hakim Danish will team up with Japanese racer Ryusei Yamanaka, as his teammate, Angel Piqueras, moves up to Moto2 class.

Hakim Danish ended this season's Red Bull Rookies Cup in third place overall with 171 points afer the last race in Misano Circuit in September, 65 points behind overall champion, Brian Uriarte of Spain, while second place went to Indonesian Veda Pramata, with 181 points. – Bernama

Right on the Marq

Alex seals second Moto GP position behind brother Marc after sprint race win



Ducati Lenovo's Francesco Bagnaia (centre) in first place, BK8's Alex Marquez (left) came in second and Pertamina Enduro's Franco Morbidelli took third yesterday. – *BERNAMAPIC*

BK8 GRESINI Racing MotoGP rider Alex Marquez has confirmed his status as the overall runner-up of this season's MotoGP championship after finishing second in the sprint race in the Malaysia Grand Prix (GP) 2025 at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) yesterday.

The younger brother of 2025 MotoGP champion Marc Marquez claimed nine points from the podium finish, taking his total to 388 points despite two rounds remaining, the Portugal GP and Valencia GP.

Meanwhile, the battle for third overall has changed hands, with Ducati Lenovo Team rider Francesco Bagnaia (286 points) overtaking Aprilia Racing's Marco Bezzecchi (285 points).

Alex admitted he did not expect to achieve such a significant result, especially with his brother Marc still recovering from a shoulder injury that forced him to end his season early.

"History with Marc who is at home. So really happy and now we need to enjoy. We have three races in front of us to enjoy, to try things next year for sure but especially to celebrate," he told reporters after the sprint race.

Earlier, the 10-lap sprint race was won by Bagnaia in 19 minutes 53.725 seconds, followed by Marquez (19:55.984s) and his teammate Fermin Aldeguer (19:56.863s) in third.

Bagnaia, who is also the defending champion at the Sepang circuit, expressed his delight after a difficult run, having failed to finish in the recent Indonesia and Australia GPs.

"Last week we struggled a lot. Even yesterday I still had a little bit of trouble but today I was more competitive. We just need to understand what exactly happened, because I don't think we've ever had a situation like this before.

"We need to focus and understand the situation as best we can. I tried something different this weekend, and the change gave me more confidence and a better feeling when riding," he said.

The main MotoGP Malaysia race will take place today.

Meanwhile in Moto3, young Malaysian rider Muhammad Hakim Danish Ramli's desire to start on the front row was not met after finishing Qualifying Session 2 (Q2) in 14th place.

The 18-year-old rider was competing on a wildcard ticket for the Aeon Credit SIC Racing team which had previously achieved sixth position in Free Practice Session 2 (FP2) with a time of 2:10.576s but recorded a slower time of 2:11.487s.

Leopard Racing rider David Almansa took first place after clocking 2:09.846s followed by Honda Team Asia rider Taiyo Furusato (2:09.940s).

The champion for the 2025 season, Jose Antonio Rueda representing Red Bull KTM Ajo, was in third place (2:10.076s).

Muhammad Hakim Danish admitted that he made a few mistakes and almost crashed during the qualifying session, but is still determined to give his best in today's race even though he admits it is more challenging than the JuniorGP and Red Bull Rookies Cup.

"In the qualifying session earlier, I made a few mistakes and almost crashed but I was able to handle it well. I am trying to improve my position and time.

"Tomorrow's race will definitely be difficult but I will still try," he told reporters after yesterday's qualifying session. – Bernama

KBS to discuss reward scheme for Deaflympics athletes

THE Ministry of Youth and Sports (KBS) will discuss again the award of rewards under the national sports incentive scheme (Shakam) for deaf athletes who win medals at the Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics with the National Sports Council (MSN) to ensure that all athletes are celebrated fairly and sustainably.

Its Minister Hannah Yeoh said the discussion is important so that the reward rates set would be in line with the ability of funds and the principle of equality between all categories of athletes including normal, para, deaf and Special Olympics athletes.

"This one (Shakam at the Deaflympics) we have to discuss first with the MSN as I mentioned. Starting this year, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will provide special funds for them, Yeoh told reporters yesterday.

"So we have to make sure that the funds provided are sufficient and if we want to give them, what is the rate? So all that we need to discuss first."

She stressed that KBS always appreciates the sacrifices of every national athlete, but the review process must be done regularly so that every decision is inclusive and prudent.

Previously, the Malaysian Deaf Sports Association (MSDeaf) received a letter from MSN on Oct 17 stating that the 2025 Deaf SEA Games in Jakarta, Indonesia could not be considered because it was not in the Shakam scheme payment structure.

At that time, the country's deaf athletes brought home 25 gold medals, 16 silver and 11 bronze medals, thus being crowned the overall champion at the second edition of the games.

The Tokyo 2025 Deaflympics is scheduled to take place from Nov 15 to 26. – Bernama

RESULTS

ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE: **Leeds 2** *(Aaronson 3, Rodon 15)* **West Ham 1** *(Fernandes 90)*.

LA LIGA: **Real Sociedad 2** *(Oyazabal 19-pen, 36)* **Sevilla 1** *(Gudelj 30)*.

SERIA A: **AC Milan 2** *(Leao 7, Athekame 90+3)* **Pisa 2** *(Cuadrado 60-pen, NZola 86)*.

BUNDESLIGA: Werder Bremen 1 Union Berlin 0.

FRENCH LIGUE 1: Paris FC 1 Nantes 2.

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Winning Results
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Draw No: 275/25 Date: 25/10/2025

4D Classic

1st Prize	8326
2nd Prize	4304
3rd Prize	3686

SPECIAL		CONSOLATION	
1204	4414	0504	1124
7469	2845	7780	5404
3086	0170	8637	9288
2909	0965	7411	4508
2844	3113	0735	4284

4D Jackpot

Jackpot 1 **RM4,870,958.82**

8326 + 4304	8326 + 3686
4304 + 8326	4304 + 3686
3686 + 8326	3686 + 4304

Jackpot 2 **RM129,501.08**
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Jackpot 1 **RM11,296,447.26**
Jackpot 1 - Group 1 + Golden Number

Jackpot 2 **RM100,000.00** PARTIALLY WON
Jackpot 2 - Group 2 + Golden Number

GROUP 1	2 6 0 4 8 6		
GROUP 2	26048	OR	60486
GROUP 3	2604	OR	0486
GROUP 4	260	OR	486
GROUP 5	26	OR	86
		OR	04
GOLDEN NUMBER	1 3		

All jackpot amounts stated above are for this Draw. Subject to T&Cs of the Scheme. Please visit to www.magnum4d.my for more info.
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Documents legitimate: TMJ



All seven Harimau Malaya players of foreign origin hold proper papers, says JDT owner Tunku Ismail

BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE
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JOHOR REGENT Tunku Mahkota Ismail said Malaysia must be prepared to accept any decision made by Fifa regarding the eligibility of seven national football players currently under investigation, while stressing that the country should continue to fight for its rights.

Johor Darul Ta'zim (JDT) football club owner Tunku Ismail said that while he firmly believes all seven Harimau Malaya players of foreign origin hold legitimate documents proving their ties to Malaysia, he doubts that Fifa will reverse its decision.

"Yes, that is my opinion. FAM is still fighting for the rights of the seven players to represent the country because all the documents were properly issued by the government.

"I believe there was a technical issue, perhaps an administrative error when the papers were submitted. But when it comes to legitimacy and integrity, they are Malaysians.

"That is our sovereignty and diversity, and we should not question it," said Tunku Ismail in a press conference held in Subang Jaya, Selangor yesterday.

Tunku Ismail, better known as TMJ, faced the media alone during a more than hour-long press conference organised by the Football Association of Malaysia (FAM).

He said he chose to personally address all questions from journalists to clarify matters, as many had linked him to the controversy surrounding Fifa's sanctions against Malaysia national team and its players.

The seven players involved are Gabriel Felipe Arrocha, Facundo Garces, and Jon Irazabal from Spain; Hector Hevel from the Netherlands; Rodrigo Holgado and Imanol Machuca from Argentina; and Joao Figueiredo from Brazil.

In the bid to register the players as naturalised Malaysians, FAM stated that the players' grandparents were born in various parts of Malaysia, including Melaka, Penang, Johor, and Sarawak.

TMJ said the players had been approved to play by both the government and Fifa before the issue arose, and any administrative mistake should not overshadow their right to represent Malaysia.

"I don't think the players forged any documents. They didn't know anything. Rules are rules, and we must respect them, but if we believe we are right and have valid documents, we must continue to fight through the proper legal channels, even up to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS) if necessary," he said.

The Johor Regent also acknowledged that Fifa's decision may remain unchanged, but hopes any punishment will be lighter.

"Maybe there will be fines, point deductions, or player suspensions we don't know yet. But regardless of the outcome, our focus should be on finding a solution, not blaming any party," he added.

When asked about the impact of the situation on national football, TMJ rejected suggestions that Malaysia's football development was facing a "revolutionary failure," saying that progress had already been made in tactical and structural aspects.

"In terms of football, there is improvement. Players now understand the system and play with structure.

"Training is more organised, and team spirit is stronger. You cannot call it a failure just because of this issue with the seven players," he said.

He stressed that the focus should remain on long-term development and integrity in Malaysian football.

He added that despite the current challenges, Malaysia must not halt its football development efforts.

"This is not a failure, it's a hiccup. Every hiccup should not make us stop. We must continue as long as we are right. We have to fight for our players.

"They gave everything for the national team and helped earn points for Malaysia. If they are our soldiers, we should not leave them behind," he declared.

Regarding FAM general secretary Datuk Noor Azman Rahman position, TMJ said any disciplinary action would be up to FAM but hoped fairness would prevail.

"I believe there was a technical issue during submission. I hope he won't be suspended for long because we should channel our energy into solving the issue, not punishing one person.

"If he is to be suspended, then everyone involved should be, too. It's not fair for one person to take all the blame."

Tunku Ismail also said that he will continue to support all Malaysian players, regardless of their origins, saying that what matters most is their genuine connection and dedication to the country.

He added that Malaysia should continue identifying and recruiting players from abroad who have Malaysian heritage or ties, as they can contribute positively to the national team's growth and success.

"I don't care where they come from, be it Africa, Antarctica, anywhere.

What matters is that they have Malaysian blood and want to represent their country.

"They played with sincerity, and as a Malaysian football supporter, I will stand by them no matter what."

On Sept 26, Fifa imposed a 12-month suspension on seven naturalised players from Malaysia's national football team and fined the FAM in the amount of approximately RM1.8 million over alleged forged documents used during an Asian Cup Qualifier.

FAM has since attributed the issue to a technical error in document submission and filed a formal appeal on Oct 14 with Fifa is expected to deliver its decision on Oct 30.

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