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**GOOD VIBES ...** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim gives the thumbs-up sign as he poses with Chinese Premier Li Qiang on arrival at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday for the 28th Asean Plus Three Summit. – ***ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN***

# M'sia wins praise from UN chief for steadfast stance

## Guterres commends unwavering support for Palestine and urges Security Council reform to restore global credibility

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

**KUALA LUMPUR:** United Nations secretary-general Antonio Guterres has lauded Malaysia's steadfast stance on Palestine, using the moment to press for bold reform of the UN Security Council, which he warned is losing credibility and moral weight.

"I would like to express my appreciation for what has been the constant and coherent foreign policy of Malaysia – one that has no double standards and has been strongly advocating for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and statehood," Guterres said during a press conference following the Asean-UN Summit at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday.

He was responding to questions about Malaysia's interest in contributing to a potential Gaza peacekeeping mission.

"It is not yet clear what kind of force, or under what circumstances, will be created. What is important now is to make sure that the ceasefire holds, that Phase One of the agreement is fully implemented and that the UN is ready to play whatever role the key actors in this process determine."

Phase One is intended as a first step towards a broader resolution – a pause in fighting and an opening for humanitarian relief, before moving into a full end-of-war phase and reconstruction.

Guterres' remarks came as global powers continue to negotiate a sustainable truce in Gaza following months of escalating violence between Israel and Hamas.

He also used the press conference to deliver a blunt critique of the UN Security Council, warning that its structure no longer mirrors today's geopolitical realities.

"It is clear that the Security Council has a problem of legitimacy and effectiveness. We have three European permanent members – France, the United Kingdom and Russia - but only one from Asia and none from Latin America or Africa.

"This shows that the Council does not correspond to the world of today."

Guterres said Africa and Latin America must gain permanent representation to make the Council more inclusive and credible. He also urged serious consideration of proposals by the UK and France to limit the use of veto powers in specific cases.

"The Security Council must regain its legitimacy and effectiveness if we are to maintain international peace and security."

Earlier in his opening remarks, Guterres urged regional leaders to pursue collective solutions for development, climate action and digital transformation, while warning that "global governance must become more inclusive, representative, equitable and effective".

He said Asean's role as a stabilising force was vital in tackling widening inequalities, runaway technologies and entrenched conflicts around the world.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has announced that Malaysia is ready to join a UN-led peacekeeping mission in Gaza alongside like-minded nations, including other members of the OIC or Organisation of Islamic Cooperation.

He said the matter was conveyed to Guterres at a bilateral meeting on Sunday, according to an official statement.

Anwar said the meeting was also aimed at strengthening Malaysia's cooperation with the UN, while expressing Malaysia's full support for the UN reform agenda.




Guterres (right) praised Malaysia for maintaining a consistent and principled foreign policy on Palestine while calling for sweeping reform of the UN Security Council to address what he described as its crisis of legitimacy. – ***ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN***

# PM calls for diplomacy, inclusivity at East Asia Summit

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has called for continued engagement with Myanmar and North Korea, underscoring Malaysia's belief that dialogue – not isolation – remains key to resolving regional conflicts and humanitarian crises.

Speaking at the 20th East Asia Summit (EAS) at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday, Anwar said Malaysia has reached an understanding with Myanmar's military leadership to allow humanitarian aid into the conflict-torn nation under two strict conditions – an immediate ceasefire and full access to all communities.

He said the engagement took place following the March earthquake in Myanmar's Sagaing Region which was felt as far as Bangkok and prompted regional coordination on relief efforts.

"Following the earthquake in Bangkok, I met with Senior General Min Aung Hlaing and conveyed Malaysia's readiness to provide all necessary humanitarian support on two conditions.

"First, an immediate ceasefire to stop the bombings. Second, that humanitarian assistance, including our field hospital in Myanmar, be given full access to all communities irrespective of ethnicity, religion or political persuasion.

"I must commend that Senior General Min Aung agreed to this. Over the past year, we've seen relative progress. There are still complaints about some shootings, but certainly not on the scale we usually see."

Anwar also announced that Malaysia will be inviting all 27 minority groups and opposition parties from Myanmar for inclusive engagement sessions in Kuala Lumpur ahead of the country's general election in December.

The junta-ruled nation is scheduled to hold its first polls since the February 2021 coup that ousted Aung San Suu Kyi's civilian government.

However, human rights groups have rejected the election as a sham, while Asean is still mulling whether to send observers to ensure a fair process.

Anwar stressed that while the international community must uphold democratic principles, Myanmar should also be allowed to conduct its state affairs through its own national mechanisms.

He added that Malaysia would continue urging Myanmar's authorities to ensure the elections are inclusive, fair and free, while maintaining dialogue with opposition and minority groups to promote national reconciliation.

Turning to the crisis in Gaza, Anwar urged world leaders to act decisively to end what he described as "madness, genocide and atrocities", calling for sustained international efforts towards a just and inclusive political settlement.

"It is an important and critical beginning to stop this madness, genocide and atrocities. But we urge that this plan must be followed through and closely monitored so that there is lasting peace – inclusive, just and politically sustainable for Palestine."

He said Malaysia's stance remains rooted in engagement and dialogue, consistent with the values that underpin Asean and the EAS.

"Years ago, our predecessors had the wisdom and foresight to establish this summit as a forum for dialogue on issues of common concern – a forum that strengthens global norms and universally recognised values, with Asean as the driving force."

Anwar said the diversity of the EAS remains its greatest strength and a reminder of what regional cooperation can achieve when guided by inclusivity and mutual respect.

"This achievement demonstrates that diversity does not divide. Our task is to ensure that growth is fair, prosperity is widely shared and progress brings peace." – *BY* ***FAIZ RUZMAN***

# Modern expressway captures global admiration

**KUALA LUMPUR:** United States President Donald Trump has left Malaysia for his next destination, but a video of his motorcade along the Maju Expressway (MEX) has captured global attention and admiration.

The 13-second clip, posted on the X platform by Trump's Special Assistant and Communications Advisor Margo Martin, shows the presidential convoy gliding along the sleek, tree-lined highway from Kuala Lumpur International Airport (KLIA) to the capital.

Captioned "President Trump's motorcade through Malaysia en route to the Asean Summit", the video has since drawn over two million views and counting.

Malaysia was Trump's first stop on his Asia tour, where he attended the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits. He flew to Japan yesterday before continuing to South Korea for the Apec Economic Leaders' Week 2025 in the coastal city of Gyeongju.

Martin's short video quickly spread across social media, with users marvelling at Malaysia's modern highway network and lush surroundings.

"This looks like the opening scene from Independence Day," commented Mike Kearney from Pennsylvania, while Shubham Singh Gaur from India quipped "that convoy looks like Fast & Furious: Presidential Drift".

"If he's headed to Kuala Lumpur from the airport, he'll pass by lots of oil palm trees. It's amazing how many there are, row after row, almost endless!" remarked user Neesie from the US.

Among the most common remarks was praise for Malaysia's road infrastructure.

"Epic convoy, solid view and I love my country," Malaysians echoed proudly online.

MEX, which began operations on Dec 13, 2007, spans 26km and serves as a vital link connecting KL, Putrajaya, Cyberjaya and KLIA. Built for smooth traffic flow and efficiency, MEX remains a preferred route for travellers commuting between these major destinations.

For most Klang Valley commuters, it's just another daily drive, but Martin's video was a reminder of how rarely we pause to appreciate our own backyard. It also gave Malaysians a reason to take pride in the roads we often take for granted. – Bernama

# Trump dancing video storms social media

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A video of President Donald Trump dancing during his visit to Malaysia has trended on social media, attracting 37.9 million views across various platforms.

Trump's adviser Alex Bruesewitz highlighted the video's strong traction online, noting its rapid surge in popularity.

"This video that @margomartin captured of President Trump dancing in Malaysia has just surpassed one million likes on our @TeamTrump Instagram and has a whopping 21.5 million views. It also has 17.1 million views on Facebook and 9.3 million on TikTok.

"Trump is the leader of the world and the king of social media," he said in a post on X yesterday.

Special Assistant to the President and Communications Advisor Margo Martin, who reposted Bruesewitz's post, said the clip shows Trump engaging warmly with delegates and joining in a dance to local music.

"Eight years with President Trump and this may just be my favourite video captured yet," she wrote.

The video has drawn numerous reactions from users on X, such as user @KarlDHarrison who commented: "The reality is that Trump loves people and it shows. They love him back. It burns the pseudo-intellectuals but it's true."

Trump is the third US president in history to visit Malaysia, after Lyndon B. Johnson in 1966 and Barack Obama in 2014 and 2015. – Bernama

# KL Peace Accord not 100% bulletproof

## Ceasefire offers diplomacy window but border tensions between Cambodia, Thailand could still threaten regional stability: Analysts

BY **HARITH KAMAL**
*newsdesk@thesundaily.com*

**PETALING JAYA:** The Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord may have grabbed global headlines, but experts caution it signals only a pause in hostilities and not a genuine peace breakthrough between Cambodia and Thailand, urging Malaysia to manage expectations carefully.

Nusantara Academy of Strategic Research senior fellow Prof Dr Azmi Hassan said the term "Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord", widely used by international media, may not accurately reflect the agreement's nature.

"The term was likely introduced by US President Donald Trump, but the correct name is the Kuala Lumpur Accord. It's not a peace agreement – it's a ceasefire and little has shifted since last May or July."

Azmi also said Malaysia should not place too much emphasis on the accord's symbolic value, adding that the unresolved border issue between Cambodia and Thailand could still pose risks to regional stability.

"It could backfire if border clashes were to break out again. However, if Trump's involvement leads to a finalised border agreement, the accord could help position Malaysia as a reliable diplomatic partner."

He also emphasised that Malaysia's role should remain diplomatic and measured.

"If hostilities resume between Cambodia and Thailand, Malaysia should not be seen as responsible. The onus would lie with Trump, who brokered the accord."

Meanwhile, Universiti Utara Malaysia geopolitical analyst Assoc Prof Dr Mohamad Faisol Keling said the Kuala Lumpur Peace Accord reflects the determination of both Cambodia and Thailand to resolve their conflict peacefully.

"The accord shows both sides' willingness to prioritise stability and peace through diplomacy. Its success, however, depends on how committed both countries are to maintaining that peace."

He said Malaysia and Asean's diplomatic approach aligns with the region's long-standing preference for peaceful conflict resolution.

"The agreement demonstrates Asean's belief that diplomacy remains the best method for resolving disputes in Southeast Asia."

On the question of US involvement, Faisol said Washington's direct engagement in the region remains limited despite its historical presence.

"Since 1945, the US has maintained an interest in Southeast Asia, but direct involvement in regional conflicts is still unlikely.

"This region is not like the Middle East, which faces higher security threats.

"In this context, the US recognises the stability of Southeast Asia and trusts Malaysia as well as Asean's diplomatic efforts to preserve peace in the region."

Faisol also said the agreement could serve as a model for future regional conflict resolution mechanisms.

"The 'middleman' approach is not new. It has seen success before, such as Malaysia's role in facilitating peace in the southern Philippines and ongoing efforts in southern Thailand.

"The United Nations' peacekeeping framework operates on the same principle."




Anwar and Lee gesture during a bilateral meeting between Malaysia and South Korea following the 26th Asean–ROK SUMMIT. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# S. Korea pledges stronger Asean partnership

**KUALA LUMPUR:** South Korean President Lee Jae-myung made his first appearance at the Asean Summit since taking office in June, pledging to deepen Seoul's partnership with the regional bloc through trade, people-to-people exchanges and closer cooperation against transnational crime.

Lee joined Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and other regional leaders at the 26th Asean–Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, in which both sides reaffirmed their commitment to regional stability and shared growth amid global uncertainty.

As chair, Anwar called for stronger collaboration to build regional resilience in the face of economic fragmentation, technological disruption and shifting supply chains.

He said both sides had shown that progress "must come and could be enhanced through collaboration and cooperation" despite geopolitical rivalries.

"Our relations have developed over the past three decades as a model of trust, mutual respect and shared benefit between Asean and the Republic of Korea."

He also said trade between both sides surpassed US$200 billion in 2024, underscoring the strength of their economic ties.

"By combining Asean's growth potential with the Republic of Korea's strengths, we could shape an ecosystem that creates new opportunities, fostering inclusive growth and open markets. You must develop human capital that is future-ready to prepare our peoples to lead change."

Before the summit, Lee met members of the Korean community in Malaysia and pledged stronger support for their safety and rights abroad.

At the session, he outlined Seoul's plan to deepen the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership forged with Asean last year and proposed hosting a special Korea–Asean summit in 2029 to mark the 40th anniversary of diplomatic ties.

"South Korea will be a contributor to Asean's dreams and hopes by expanding two-way exchanges to 15 million visits a year.

We will also be a springboard for Asean's growth and innovation, aiming to raise our annual trade to US$300 billion, and a partner for peace and stability by working together on maritime security, disaster response and transnational crime."

Lee said organised criminal networks, including regional scam centres, were spreading in border areas where the rule of law is weak, leaving many young people vulnerable to trafficking and cybercrime.

"The Korean National Police Agency will work closely with Aseanapol to dismantle these criminal hubs and ensure transnational crimes cannot take root in the region, while expanding criminal justice cooperation both bilaterally and within Asean."

– *By* ***Faiz Ruzman***

# Proposal to create regional medical supply reserve

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

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Asean has proposed the creation of a regional reserve of medical supplies under the Asean Plus Three (APT) framework to strengthen the region's preparedness for future health crises, a move Malaysia is urging member states to fast-track.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, who chaired the 28th APT Summit at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre yesterday, said the establishment of the Asean+3 Reserve of Medical Supplies for Public Health Emergencies was crucial to ensuring the region's collective readiness in facing future pandemics or similar threats.

"We should proceed to establish the proposed APT reserve on medical supplies for public health emergencies to prepare for future health crises."

He said the APT grouping, which brings together Asean member states with China, Japan and South Korea, had consistently proven its value during times of crisis.

"Born in the wake of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1996, the APT has prevailed through other crises and proven its effectiveness during the Covid-19 era," he said, adding that the grouping must now evolve beyond past achievements to ensure fairness, inclusivity and shared prosperity in the next phase of regional growth.

"Our task is clear; to ensure that growth is fair, prosperity is widely shared and progress brings peace. We must prepare our youth and women for an East Asia that is sustainable, inclusive and interconnected."

The Asean+3 Summit was co-chaired by Anwar, Chinese Premier Li Qiang, Japanese Foreign Minister Motegi Toshimitsu, and South Korean President Lee Jae-myung.

Anwar also emphasised that regional growth must be fair and inclusive, ensuring that prosperity is broadly shared and that progress contributes to lasting peace and stability.

He said it was vital to prepare the youth and women of Asean+3 for a region that is sustainable, inclusive and interconnected.

The prime minister also looked forward to a constructive engagement on the future of this cooperation, in which the region continues to serve as a cradle of stability, opportunity, and hope.

Toshimitsu, the current coordinator for the Plus Three countries, reaffirmed Tokyo's commitment to regional food and financial security via mechanisms such as the APT Emergency Rice Reserve and the Chiang Mai Initiative.

Meanwhile, Li called on regional economies to uphold "openness and cooperation" amid rising protectionism, adding that the "East Asian Miracle" remains a living story rather than a chapter of the past.

# Brazil supports M'sia BRICS bid

BY **THE SUN TEAM**
*newsdesk@thesundaily.com*

**PETALING JAYA:** Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva said the country has pledged its support for Malaysia's bid to become a full member of BRICS.

Lula said this when asked at a press conference yesterday if he would like to see Malaysia join the bloc as a permanent member.

"I have learned that human behaviour is what truly matters, everything else comes after. You asked if I want Malaysia to be a full member of BRICS.

"Well, I can say Malaysia will have Brazil's support in becoming one."

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim first announced Malaysia's interest in joining BRICS in mid-2024, adding that the bloc's goals were in line with Malaysia's push for a multipolar world and inclusive global governance.

In July 2024, Malaysia formally submitted its expression of interest to join BRICS, and subsequently became a partner country on Jan 1, 2025, following the 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia, held in October 2024.

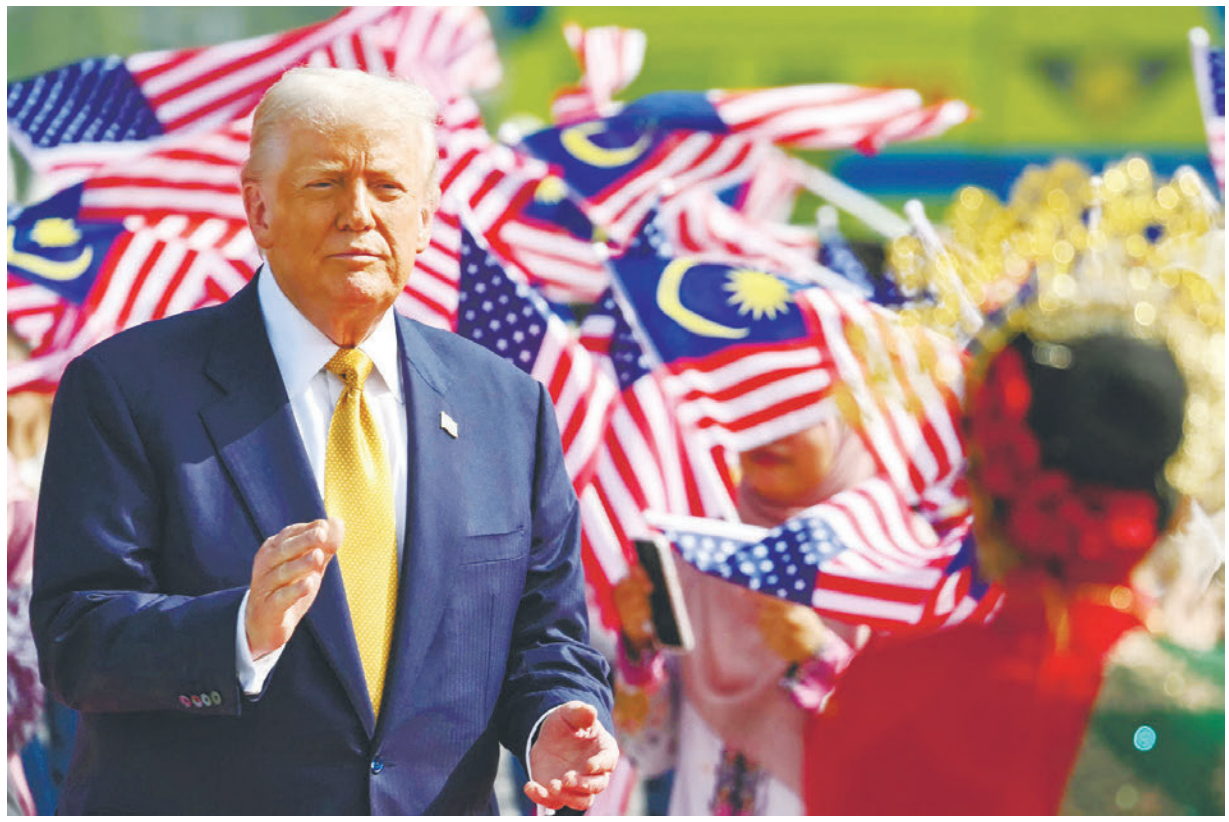
The partnership status was conferred under Russia's chairmanship of the group, which comprises Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.

Anwar also previously revealed that China had pledged its support for Malaysia's bid for full membership.






**MERRY MOMENT ...** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim shares a laugh with New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon. – ***AFPPIC***



**STARS AND STRIPES ...** United States President Donald Trump pictured next to Malaysian and US national flags before departing on Air Force One from the Kuala Lumpur International Airport. – ***AFPPIC***



**DUTY CALLS ...** A United States Secret Service operative conducting a security sweep during US President Donald Trump's attendance at the 47th Asean Summit. – ***BERNAMAPIC***




**PRESIDENTIAL PROCESSION ...** The official convoy of US President Donald Trump seen leaving the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits. – ***BERNAMAPIC***



**REPORTER RAPPORT ...** Timor-Leste Prime Minister Kay Rala Xanana Gusmao greeting media staff during the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. – ***ADAM AMIR HAMZAH/THESUN***



**SPIRITED SHOW ...** Performers dance at the reception ceremony for the admission of Timor-Leste to the Asean bloc. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# Government urged to create flood-risk map portal

## Such information should be standardised and mandatory in property listings and sales agreements: Educator

BY **HARITH KAMAL**
*newsdesk@thesundaily.com*

**PETALING JAYA:** The government should establish a "National Flood-Risk Map Portal" to help homebuyers make informed decisions and compel developers to prioritise safer, climate-resilient sites, said Universiti Teknologi Malaysia property economics and finance expert Assoc Prof Dr Muhammad Najib Razali.

He said this would promote transparency and accountability by giving developers and buyers open access to flood-risk data before any property transaction takes place.

"Flood-risk information should be public, standardised and mandatory in all property listings, brochures and sales agreements."

He said Malaysians have no easy way to verify if a property sits on a floodplain, although agencies such as PlanMalaysia and the Department of Irrigation and Drainage possess the data.

Malaysia lacks a centralised public flood-risk portal. While agencies maintain their own flood maps and hazard databases, access remains fragmented and largely unavailable to the public.

Najib said a unified and interactive national map would mirror successful practices in countries such as Japan, the United States and the United Kingdom, where flood-risk information forms part of property disclosure requirements.

"Malaysia could emulate these models by creating a portal accessible to buyers and developers, making flood-risk disclosure mandatory in sale and purchase agreements, and linking these disclosures to insurance incentives that reward low-risk properties."

He described Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof's recent announcement to include flood-risk assessments (FRA) in housing project approvals as a transformative and necessary policy shift, but said its success would depend on effective coordination between the federal and state governments.

He said the inclusion of FRA in new housing approvals signals Malaysia's transition from reactive disaster management to proactive, climate-resilient planning, aligning the country with international standards.

"For decades, housing approvals have focused primarily on land use and economic feasibility, often overlooking environmental risk. This reform is urgent and long overdue, especially given the increasing frequency and intensity of floods linked to climate change."

Najib said the December 2021 floods, which caused losses exceeding RM6 billion, highlighted the need for stronger urban planning controls to prevent developments on floodplains and reduce future disaster costs.

However, he cautioned that implementation may not be uniform as land and planning matters fall under state jurisdiction.

"Many local councils lack hydrologists, geographic information systems analysts or climate specialists, and flood data remain fragmented across agencies.

"The government could consider forming a federal–state coordination mechanism to oversee data sharing, provide technical support and review high-risk project proposals before approval," he said.

Najib urged authorities to prioritise retrofitting in existing housing areas located in flood-prone zones, stressing that flood management should extend beyond new developments.

He recommended upgrading drainage systems, expanding retention ponds and introducing green infrastructure, such as rain gardens and permeable pavements.

He acknowledged that retrofitting could be costly, and since developers are no longer liable for older projects, the financial burden often falls on homeowners or local councils.

He proposed that the government introduce tax incentives, matching grants or public-private partnerships to fund resilience upgrades, citing Singapore's Active, Beautiful, Clean Waters Programme, which co-funds up to 80% of flood mitigation costs.

Najib said Malaysia's long-term goal should be to mainstream climate resilience across all urban planning and housing policies.

"This includes integrating FRA into the environmental impact assessment process, promoting nature-based flood defences and offering incentives such as tax rebates or lower financing rates for flood-resilient designs.

"Malaysia's decision to integrate flood-risk assessment into housing approvals represents a pivotal step towards climate-resilient, sustainable development.

"With coordinated planning, transparent data and targeted incentives, this policy could become a cornerstone of resilient nation-building," he said.



Najib said the December 2021 floods, which caused losses exceeding RM6 billion, highlighted the need for stronger urban planning controls to prevent developments on floodplains and reduce future disaster costs. – ***ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN***

# Gender responsive and participatory budgeting urged

**KEPALA BATAS:** The Housing and Local Government Ministry has urged local authorities nationwide to adopt gender responsive and participatory budgeting (GRPB) according to their local contexts as a new governance standard.

Minister Nga Kor Ming said the ministry is committed to strengthening policies and providing support to expand the implementation of GRPB nationwide.

"The ministry has always maintained that local authorities are the frontline of national governance. This is where the pulse of the people is felt and where the government is judged on its ability to understand and meet the real needs of our multi-ethnic society.

"We are strengthening the combined approach of being 'gender responsive' and the integration of gender responsive budgeting and participatory budgeting as a national policy tool.

"This ensures budgets truly meet the people's needs so that no one is left behind or marginalised," he said in his speech during the Neksus GRPB National Conference and Applied Workshop here yesterday.

His opening address was delivered via a video conference. Also present were State Social Development, Welfare and Non-Islamic Affairs Committee chairperson Lim Siew Kim and Kuala Lumpur City Hall Mayor Datuk Seri Dr Mainumah Mohd Sharif.

The conference promotes a combined approach, integrating two complementary budgeting methods to promote more democratic and inclusive budget planning and decision-making, Bernama reported.

Jointly organised by the Penang Island City Council, Seberang Perai City Council and Penang Women's Development Corporation, the conference was attended by local authorities from across the country.

Nga added that GRPB embodies the values of Malaysia Madani, such as sustainability, care and compassion, respect, and trust, and supports Sustainable Development Goals 5, 10, 11 and 16.

Lim emphasised that GRPB is not solely about women, but also about justice, participation, balance and sustainable development.

She explained that its principle is simple: to recognise that different groups have different needs.

She said the conference represents a unifying point for national resolve and would provide fresh inspiration to strengthen inclusive budgeting within each local authority, ensuring no voice is marginalised and no community is left behind.

"May this act as a catalyst for a new wave of fairer, more responsive and more sustainable governance. This is for a truly inclusive Madani Malaysia, in which what began as a small idea has grown into a state-level policy practice under the state government's gender inclusion policy."

# Nearly 50,000 use free bus service: Transport minister

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The BAS.MY free bus service offered by the Transport Ministry has benefited 49,611 people as of August, the Dewan Rakyat was told yesterday.

Transport Minister Anthony Loke said 78% of passengers enjoying the free bus service under the BAS.MY concession card programme are senior citizens, followed by students at 13%, persons with disabilities at 6% and university students at 3%.

"The BAS.MY service under the Stage Bus Service Transformation Programme focuses on state capitals and surrounding areas, particularly outside the Klang Valley.

"As of October, the service has been operating in Kangar, Kota Setar, Ipoh, Seremban, Malacca, Johor Bahru, Kuala Terengganu, Kota Bharu and Kuching. The service is also being introduced in Kota Kinabalu," he said during question time.

He was responding to Khoo Poay Tiong (PH-Malacca City), who wanted to know the number of BAS.MY concession card users by state and the percentage breakdown by category.

Loke said Johor Bahru recorded the highest number of BAS.MY concession card users at 16,832, followed by Kuching at 10,215, Ipoh at 7,304, Seremban at 6,310 and Malacca at 4,668.

On the lack of bus stop facilities, he said the government is strengthening public-private partnerships to expand such amenities nationwide and boost public transport usage.

He said despite ongoing efforts, there are challenges in terms of funding and resources as the provision of bus stops also requires cooperation from local authorities.

Loke said the ministry is implementing a public-private partnership model that allows private companies to sponsor and maintain bus stops in exchange for advertising opportunities at those locations.

"Not all bus stops need to be built by the government or local authorities. We could provide the sites, and the ministry is developing a programme in which private companies could adopt bus stops.

"I hope work to enhance bus stops and pedestrian walkways would continue." – Bernama

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# 'Proposed social media ban must ensure user privacy'

## Meaningful change requires coordinated action to reinforce child protection: Public policy analyst



Yeoh said protecting children in the digital era requires more than just parental vigilance. – ***AI BY AZURA ABAS/THESUN***

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A recent spate of school crimes, culminating in the fatal stabbing of a teenage girl by her schoolmate, has sparked calls for Malaysia to raise the minimum age for phone and social media use.

Far from isolated incidents, the disturbing surge in youth violence has shaken parents and communities nationwide, exposing how unmonitored digital exposure is increasingly tied to disciplinary issues, cyberbullying and a worsening mental health crisis among students.

At its meeting on Oct 17, the Cabinet proposed three measures to address safety issues in schools, including banning phone use among students aged 16 and below.

The move aims to curb disciplinary problems and reduce the influence of social media and online games often linked to bullying and crime.

While many parents and academics welcomed the proposal, public policy analyst Dr Tricia Yeoh said the ban and proposed age limit must be implemented carefully to protect user privacy.

"I believe we should raise the internet adulthood age to 16 because there are many dark corners online that are dangerous for children to access, including hardcore pornography.

"The government's move is right, but it has to be done in a way that does not invade users' privacy. There are ways to ban social media for those under 16 that do not involve electronic Know-Your-Customer (eKYC) verification and that is the right direction."

The University of Nottingham Malaysia associate professor of practice said alternatives such as "zero-knowledge proof", already used in the tech industry, could prevent underage users from creating social media accounts without exposing private data.

She cited research by US social psychologist Professor Jonathan Haidt, whose book "The Anxious Generation" links the rise in depression and anxiety among adolescents between 2010 and 2020 to widespread phone adoption.

"Haidt's research found that phones and unrestricted access to digital platforms led to social deprivation, sleep loss, attention fragmentation and addiction."

Yeoh stressed that protecting children in the digital era requires more than just parental vigilance, Bernama reported.

"Meaningful change would require coordinated action across government, industry, schools and families, ensuring accountability, education and shared responsibility reinforce child protection," she said.

She also urged a nationwide "parents' pact" to collectively withhold phones from children until they turn 16 years old, suggesting the use of "landline pods" for communication instead.

"If parents could agree not to provide phones for children aged under 16, it would relieve peer pressure among children. But this needs collective community action. May the stabbing incident be a wake-up call for all of society," she said.

Clinical psychologist and mental health organisation Relate Malaysia founder Dr Chua Sook Ning echoed the urgency for reform, saying the government must act swiftly to limit social media use among children under 16.

"Research shows that problematic social media use is linked to poor mental health outcomes. Parents need help through training programmes to set digital rules, apply content filters and talk to their children early about online use."

# Dept announces 50% discount on summonses for two months

**SUNGAI PETANI:** Motorists have from Nov 1 to Dec 30 to pay off outstanding Road Transport Department summonses at a 50% discount.

Its director-general Datuk Aedy Fadly Ramli said the discount applies to all summonses, except those that are not eligible for compounding.

He advised those with outstanding summonses to take advantage of the offer by settling payments at department counters or via the available online and payment channels.

"We urge the public to take advantage of the two-month window to settle their summonses.

"The discount applies to all types of summonses, except for the automated awareness safety system summonses, investigation notices and stamped summons notices, which have been in effect since early last year.

"It does not cover summonses that cannot be compounded, such as those that must be brought to court," he said during a special media conference on Op Gempur on Sunday.

He also said no discounts would be offered for department and police summonses after the end of December.

Aedy Fadly added that the department is conducting Op Perang Lebih Muatan from Oct 14 to Dec 31 to crack down on commercial vehicles carrying loads beyond the permitted limits.

He said 27,300 vehicles have been inspected, of which 1,017 were found to carry excessive loads.

He also said 1,696 drivers and vehicle owners were issued summonses under the Road Transport Act 1987, the Land Public Transport Act 2010 and the Commercial Vehicle Licensing Board Act 1987, while 96 lorries were impounded.

He explained that most of the targeted vehicles were carrying materials such as stones, gravel, iron and similar items, particularly from hotspots such as quarries and steel factories where those vehicles frequently operate. – Bernama

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# Trump gets royal welcome in Japan

## China trade truce hopes rise

**TOKYO:** President Donald Trump received a royal welcome yesterday in Japan, the latest leg of a five-day Asia trip which he hopes to cap with an agreement on a trade war truce with Chinese President Xi Jinping.

Trump, making his longest journey abroad since taking office in January, announced deals with four Southeast Asian countries during the first stop in Malaysia and is expected to meet Xi in South Korea on Thursday.

Negotiators from the world's top two economies hashed out a framework on Sunday for a deal to pause steeper American tariffs and Chinese rare earths export controls, US officials said.

The news sent Asian stocks soaring to record peaks.

"I've got a lot of respect for President Xi and I think we're going to come away with a deal," Trump told reporters on Air Force One before landing in Tokyo.

Wearing a gold tie and blue suit, Trump shook hands with officials on the tarmac and gave a few fist pumps, before his helicopter whisked him off for a scenic night tour of Tokyo.

His motorcade was later seen entering the Imperial Palace grounds, where he met Emperor Naruhito.

Trump has already won a US$550 billion (RM2.3 trillion) investment pledge from Tokyo in exchange for respite from punishing import tariffs.

Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi is hoping to further impress Trump with promises to buy US pickup trucks, soybeans and gas, and announce an agreement on shipbuilding, sources with knowledge of the plans told Reuters.

Takaichi, told Trump that strengthening their countries' alliance was her "top priority" in a telephone call on Saturday.

Trump said he was looking forward to meeting Takaichi, a close ally of his late friend and golfing partner, former prime minister Shinzo Abe, adding: "I think she's going to be great."

Thousands of police are guarding Tokyo. A knife-wielding man was arrested on Friday outside the US embassy and an anti-Trump protest is planned in downtown Shinjuku.

Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick and Japanese counterpart Ryosei Akazawa, architects of the tariff deal agreed in July, are set to hold a working lunch.

Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent, travelling with Trump alongside Secretary of State Marco Rubio, is also expected to meet his new counterpart, Satsuki Katayama.



Trump meets Naruhito at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. – ***AFPPIC***

Trump was the first foreign leader to meet Naruhito after he came to the throne in 2019, continuing an imperial line that some say is the world's oldest hereditary monarchy.

Naruhito's role, however, is purely symbolic, and the key diplomacy will take place with Takaichi today. – Reuters



**ROYAL SALUTE ...** Thai Army gunners fire a cannon salute outside the Grand Palace after the body of Queen Mother Sirikit was transferred there from King Chulalongkorn Memorial Hospital in Bangkok on Sunday. – ***REUTERSPIC***

## Singapore studies nuclear energy option

**SINGAPORE:** The city-state is studying the potential deployment of nuclear energy – particularly emerging technologies like small modular reactors – and released a background paper yesterday outlining the government's efforts in capability building.

Minister-in-charge of Energy, Science and Technology Dr Tan See Leng said Singapore has also formed dedicated nuclear energy teams within key agencies to lead these efforts and is collaborating with international partners.

"Nuclear energy has the potential to be a safe, reliable and cost-competitive option for Singapore.

"We understand that the public has many queries about our plans. We will engage the public regularly as we progress on this journey together," he said during a lecture at the Singapore International Energy Week yesterday.

The 16-page paper, titled "Building Singapore's Capabilities to Assess Nuclear Energy", stated that Singapore has not made any decision on the deployment of nuclear energy.

"Any decision to deploy nuclear energy will take into account the safety, reliability, affordability and environmental sustainability of the technology in Singapore's context," it said, adding that the public will be engaged regularly on any developments.

It also said Singapore will continue its efforts to build up domestic capabilities, supported by international partners.

In 2012, the Singapore government conducted a pre-feasibility study on nuclear energy.

While the study concluded that nuclear power plants of the time were not suitable for a small and densely populated city-state like Singapore, it recommended that the country continue to monitor the progress of new nuclear energy technologies.

Tan said the Energy Market Authority will sign new cooperation agreements with two US organisations: the Idaho National Laboratory and Battelle Memorial Institute to further strengthen Singapore's expertise in the area.

These cooperation agreements build on the Agreement for Cooperation Concerning Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy signed in July last year and the Memorandum of Understanding Concerning Strategic Civil Nuclear Cooperation signed in January between Singapore and the US.

Prime Minister and Finance Minister Lawrence Wong, in his Budget 2025 speech, had said that Singapore will study the potential deployment of nuclear energy in the republic and will take further steps to systematically build up its capabilities in this area. – Bernama

## China, Australia keen on stable ties

**BEIJING:** China and Australia sought yesterday to keep ties on an even keel despite tensions over military encounters in the South China Sea and rivalry in the Asia-Pacific region, with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese describing both sides as "friends".

China is ready to build a more stable and strategic partnership with Australia, Prime Minister Li Qiang told Prime Minister Anthony Albanese on the sidelines of a summit in Malaysia, according to Xinhua news agency.

Albanese visited China in July to mend ties that had been strained to near breaking point under the previous Australian administration, vowing to keep communication channels open and look for areas of cooperation while guarding against "misunderstanding".

China-Australia relations are showing a positive trend, Li told Albanese in their meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Xinhua reported.

Last week, both sides traded barbs over an encounter in the South China Sea, most of which is claimed by Beijing as part of its territory.

Australia said a Chinese fighter jet dropped flares near one of its patrol planes, prompting Beijing to complain that Canberra was trying to cover up an "intrusion" into Chinese airspace.

"I made the position directly clear that this was an incident of concern for Australia," Albanese told reporters after his meeting with Li.

Australia, in February, also criticised the actions of a Chinese fighter jet as "unsafe and unprofessional", saying it had dropped flares within 30m of a maritime patrol plane, also in the South China Sea.

In the Asia-Pacific region, China has been deepening its influence over Pacific Island nations through trade and diplomacy.

In 2022, Beijing signed a security deal with the Solomon Islands, and a year later it signed a policing agreement.

This month, Australia signed a defence cooperation deal with Papua New Guinea that observers say is aimed at countering China's growing security presence in the broader region.

Despite the rivalry and military incidents, economic ties have remained stable, with both countries repeatedly calling for free trade and further dialogue.

China is willing to work with Australia in the green economy, high-tech industries and the digital sector, Li told Albanese.

Albanese said his seventh meeting with Li showed Australia and China, its largest trading partner, could manage differences through dialogue.

"We have disagreements and friends are able to discuss issues frankly – I did that." – Reuters

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Milei celebrates his victory. – ***AFPPIC***

# Milei wins decisive victory

## Mandate to continue economic overhaul

**BUENOS AIRES:** Argentine President Javier Milei's party cruised to victory in midterm legislative elections as voters handed him a mandate to keep pushing through his radical overhaul of the economy despite widespread discontent with his deep austerity measures.

A relief to Milei, whose poll numbers had sagged in recent weeks, the results are also likely to please President Donald Trump, whose administration had faced criticism after providing Argentina with a financial bailout.

"Congratulations to President Javier Milei on his Landslide Victory in Argentina. He is doing a wonderful job! Our confidence in him was justified by the People of Argentina," Trump said in a post on Truth Social.

Analysts said the stronger-than-expected showing could reflect fear of renewed economic turmoil if the country abandoned Milei's austerity policies which, while slashing subsidies long relied on by many Argentines, have succeeded in drastically slowing inflation.

"Argentines showed that they don't want to return to the model of failure," said Milei, speaking before a crowd of supporters at a hotel in Buenos Aires after the results.

Gustavo Cordoba, the director of the Argentine Zuban Cordoba polling firm, said he was surprised by Milei's showing and thought it reflected concern about potentially repeating the economic crises of past governments.

"Many people were willing to give the government another chance," he said. "We'll see how much time Argentine society gives the Argentine government. But the triumph is unobjectionable, unquestionable."

Cordoba said Milei's government appeared to have secured the one-third of seats it needs in the Chamber of Deputies to prevent any future presidential vetoes from being overturned by Congress. In the last few months, the opposition had overturned several Milei vetoes of spending bills he had said threatened the country's fiscal balance.

"The result is better than even the most optimistic Milei supporters were hoping for," said Marcelo Garcia, Americas director of risk consultancy Horizon Engage.

"With this result, Milei will be able to easily defend his decrees and vetoes in Congress," Garcia said, adding that allies will have more of an incentive to support a winning president.

Milei in his celebratory speech suggested a deeper willingness to form partnerships, saying "there are deputies and senators from other parties with whom we can reach basic agreements."

Foreign investors have been impressed by the government's ability to significantly reduce monthly inflation from 12.8% before Milei's inauguration to 2.1% last month, while achieving a fiscal surplus and enacting sweeping deregulation measures. – Reuters

# Microsoft sued over 'misleading' AI offer

**SYDNEY:** Australia's competition watchdog accused Microsoft yesterday of misleading people into paying for its AI assistant Copilot.

The authority said it had filed a suit in the Federal Court against Microsoft Australia and its parent Microsoft Corp.

The software giant is accused of making "false or misleading" statements to around 2.7 million Australians who subscribe by auto-renewal to Microsoft 365 plans, which include a suite of online Office services.

Microsoft allegedly told customers that they had two options: either pay extra for Microsoft 365 services integrated with Copilot, or cancel their subscriptions altogether.

But there was a partly hidden third option – visible only when people started to cancel – of sticking to existing "Classic" plans without Copilot for the original price, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission said in a statement.

"Microsoft deliberately omitted reference to the Classic plans in its communications and concealed their existence until after subscribers initiated the cancellation process to increase the number of consumers on more expensive Copilot-integrated plans," commission chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb said.

"The Microsoft Office apps included in 365 subscriptions are essential in many people's lives and given there are limited substitutes to the bundled package, cancelling the subscription is a decision many would not make lightly."

The commission accused Microsoft of misleading subscribers on personal and family plans since Oct 31, 2024.

Annual subscriptions for Microsoft 365 plans incorporating Copilot were between 29% and 45% higher than those without, the watchdog said.

The commission is seeking penalties, injunctions, consumer redress, and costs.

Microsoft could face penalties of A$50 million (RM137.7 million) or more for each breach.

Microsoft did not immediately respond to AFP's request for comment. – AFP




## BRIEFS

### HELICOPTER, FIGHTER JET CRASH IN SOUTH CHINA SEA

BEIJING: A US Navy helicopter and a fighter jet crashed separately into the South China Sea within the space of an hour during routine operations conducted from the same aircraft carrier on Sunday, the US Navy said, adding all personnel were safe. The Pacific Fleet, in a post on X, said: "All personnel involved are safe and in stable condition. The cause of both incidents is under investigation." It did not disclose the location of the aircraft carrier *USS Nimitz*, from which both the helicopter and jet were conducting routine operations. China's Foreign Ministry offered humanitarian assistance to the United States after the crashes, spokesperson Guo Jiakun told a press conference yesterday. A Sea Hawk helicopter went down at about 2.45pm on Sunday and shortly afterward, an F/A-18F Super Hornet fighter jet also crashed, the Navy said. – Reuters

### LONG JAIL TERMS FOR HK BOMB PLOT TRIO

HONG KONG: A judge here ordered lengthy prison terms yesterday for three men found guilty of plotting bomb attacks aimed at forcing the city to close its borders early 2020. The trio were part of a group charged in relation to a homemade bomb that went off in a hospital toilet in January 2020, and explosive devices found at a railway station the following month. The two incidents caused no casualties. The men were convicted last month of conspiracy to cause an explosion, which carried a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison. They were acquitted of more serious terrorism charges. Lukas Ho, 41, received an 18-year sentence, with Judge Johnny Chan saying he had an "inflated ego" and showed no remorse, which posed a "risk to public safety". Lee Ka-pan and Cheung Ka-Chun each received jail terms of 16 years and eight months. – AFP

# US detains British analyst Hamdi

**WASHINGTON:** US immigration authorities detained British commentator Sami Hamdi, revoked his visa and said he would be deported rather than allowed to complete his speaking tour in the United States, a Homeland Security official said on Sunday.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement has Hamdi in custody, DHS spokesperson Tricia McLaughlin posted on X. "Under President Trump, those who support terrorism and undermine American national security will not be allowed to work or visit this country," she wrote.

Hamdi spoke at a gala for the Council on American Islamic Relations in Sacramento, California on Saturday and was scheduled to speak on Sunday at one of the group's events in Florida, the organisation said in a statement. CAIR said he was detained at San Francisco International Airport.

Conservative figures had been urging the Trump administration to expel Hamdi from the United States.

Hamdi has appeared as an analyst and commentator on British TV networks. CAIR on Sunday called for his release and accused the Trump administration of detaining him over his criticism of the Israeli government.

Reuters was unable to reach Hamdi. CAIR's deputy director, Edward Ahmed Mitchell, said Hamdi had previously denied supporting militants and that the organisation's lawyers had been unable to reach him.

"Abducting a prominent British Muslim journalist and political commentator on a speaking tour in the United States because he dared to criticise the Israeli government's genocide is a blatant affront to free speech," CAIR said in a statement. – Reuters

## Abbas readies vacancy plan

**RAMALLAH:** Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas on Sunday issued a new constitutional declaration outlining procedures for the temporary transfer of presidential powers in the event of a vacancy.

Under the declaration, if the office of the President of the Palestinian Authority becomes vacant and the Palestinian Legislative Council remains inactive, the vice-president of the Executive Committee of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), who also serves as the vice-president of the State of Palestine, will assume the duties of the president for up to 90 days.

During this period, free and direct elections will be held to elect a new president in accordance with the Palestinian Election Law.

If elections cannot be held within that timeframe due to force majeure, the term may be extended once by a decision of the Palestinian Central Council.

The declaration revokes Constitutional Declaration One of 2024 to safeguard the national interests of the Palestinian people.

In a statement, Abbas said the move aims "to protect the Palestinian political system, safeguard our homeland, ensure its security, and preserve its constitutional institutions" in the event of a leadership vacancy.

He said the dignity of the nation reflects the dignity of its people and that freedom, the rule of law, equality, democracy, pluralism, and social justice form the foundation of any legitimate governing system.

"Based on the above, and in the supreme national interest of preserving stability, we have issued this constitutional declaration to affirm the principle of separation of powers and the peaceful transfer of authority through free and fair elections," Abbas said. – Bernama

# 10 on trial over harassment of French first lady

### Defendants claim Brigitte was male at birth

**PARIS:** Ten people went on trial in Paris yesterday for sexist cyber-harassment of Brigitte Macron, in the latest case sparked by unsubstantiated gender claims thrown at the French first lady for years by some in France and beyond.

The trial comes after she and President Emmanuel Macron filed a defamation lawsuit in the United States at the end of July, in connection with a rumour amplified and repeated online that Brigitte was assigned male at birth.

The unsupported claim has long targeted the couple, alongside criticism of their 24-year age gap.

Ten defendants – eight men and two women, aged 41 to 60 – were accused of cyber-harassment. If convicted, they face up to two years in prison.

They have been accused of making malicious comments about Brigitte's gender and sexuality, even equating her age difference with her husband to "paedophilia", according to prosecutors.

The French first lady filed a complaint in August last year that led to an investigation into cyber-harassment and arrests in last December and February 2025.

Her lawyer did not respond to AFP queries, and it is not known if she will be present at the hearings.

Among the defendants is Aurelien Poirson-Atlan, 41, a publicist known on social media as "Zoe Sagan".

The defendants also include a woman already the subject of a libel complaint filed by Brigitte in 2022: Delphine J, 51, a self-proclaimed spiritual medium who goes by the pseudonym Amandine Roy.

In 2021, she posted a four-hour interview with journalist Natacha Rey on her YouTube channel, alleging Brigitte, whose maiden name is Trogneux, had once been a man called Jean-Michel Trogneux – the name of her brother.

The two women were ordered to pay damages to Brigitte and her brother last year before the conviction was overturned on appeal. The first lady has since taken the case to the country's highest appeals court. – AFP

## Families of missing hostages demand pause in truce plan

**TEL AVIV:** The families of Israeli hostages yesterday demanded that the next steps in the US-brokered Gaza ceasefire be put on hold until Hamas returns the remaining bodies.

"Hamas knows exactly where every one is held. Two weeks have passed since the deadline set for the return of all 48 hostages, yet 13 remain in captivity," the Hostages and Missing Families Forum said.

"The families urge the Government of Israel, the US administration and mediators not to advance to the next phase of the agreement until Hamas fulfils its obligations and returns every hostage."

The government said on Sunday it will maintain control of security inside Gaza despite signing up to a ceasefire that foresees the deployment of an international security force.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said Israel would decide where and when to strike its foes and which countries would be allowed to send troops to police the truce.

"Israel is an independent state. We will defend ourselves by our own means and we will continue to determine our fate," Netanyahu said. "We do not seek anyone's approval for this. We control our security."

AFP footage showed an Egyptian convoy in Gaza bringing rescuers and heavy machinery to speed up the search for the remains of deceased hostages.

Low-loader lorries flying the Egyptian flag transported bulldozers and mechanical diggers into Gaza, accompanied by tipper trucks sounding horns, en route to an Egyptian aid committee based in Al-Zawayda. – AFP



Evyatar David, who was discharged from the hospital after more than two years in Gaza captivity reacts as friends and neighbours welcome him home, in Kfar Saba, Israel, on Sunday. – ***REUTERSPIC***




A protester holds a poster of Imamoglu near the Justice Palace in Istanbul on Sunday. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# Jailed Istanbul mayor hit with new arrest order

**ISTANBUL:** A Turkish court issued a fresh arrest order for Istanbul's jailed mayor Ekrem Imamoglu yesterday on suspicion of "political espionage", marking a new stage in a crackdown on President Tayyip Erdogan's opponents.

It is not unusual for Turkish courts to issue formal arrest orders for people in custody when a new investigation is launched.

Some analysts said the move against Imamoglu, Erdogan's main rival, could lead to the state seizing control of the municipality of Istanbul.

The investigation marks an escalation of a year-long legal crackdown on the main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP).

Imamoglu and his party are already facing an array of allegations that they deny. Imamoglu has been in jail since March pending trial on separate corruption charges, and also received a fresh jail sentence in July for insulting and threatening the chief Istanbul prosecutor.

The latest court ruling accuses Imamoglu of engaging in graft to raise funds for his presidential candidacy and of "espionage" to secure international support.

Imamoglu rejected the new accusations in a statement from prison on Friday and again in court on Sunday.

"Such slander, lies and conspiracy wouldn't even cross the devil's mind!" he said on X. "We are facing shameful immorality."

An indictment from the court could pave the way for Istanbul's state-appointed governor to take control of the city. GlobalSource Partners analyst Atilla Yesilada said the Interior Ministry has the authority to sack Imamoglu and replace him with a trustee.

Anadolu said an Istanbul court had issued the arrest order overnight for Imamoglu and two others, including Merdan Yanardag, editor-in-chief of television news channel Tele1.

The channel, which is critical of the government, was seized by the state on Friday as part of the espionage accusations.

The opposition won some respite from the pressure on Friday, after another court dismissed a bid to oust the CHP's leader and annul its 2023 congress. – Reuters

COMMENT by Dr Gan Siowck Lee

# Rebuild values to steady youths' moral compass

THE recent spate of shocking incidents – from the brutal murder of a student on school grounds to the gang rape in a classroom, violent bullying and the online circulation of such assaults – has sent a chilling tremor across the nation, forcing a long-overdue reckoning with the moral compass of our youths.

While experts rightly call for stricter supervision and legal consequences, we must look deeper into the erosion of our moral and ethical foundations, a decay significantly accelerated by the unregulated digital world and the roles of our primary institutions – the school and family.

This is not merely a failure of discipline but a symptom of a wider moral crisis. As noted by experts, there is a growing culture of indifference to consequences, where the authority of teachers is undermined and parental leniency often overshadows necessary guidance.

To address this, we must revisit and significantly strengthen the role of moral education, not just as a subject in school, but also as a lived value championed collectively by parents and educators.

**Corrosive influence of social media**

A critical factor exacerbating this crisis is the pervasive influence of social media and digital content. As Assoc Prof Dr Siti Khadijah Zainal Badri noted, constant exposure to explicit material on streaming platforms and social media can warp a young person's sense of consent, respect and accountability.

This digital ecosystem normalises violence and desensitises young minds to suffering. Cyberbullying, conducted from behind a screen, erodes empathy and encourages cruelty without immediate consequence.

The pursuit of online notoriety has fuelled brutal acts, such as the recording and sharing of assaults, turning victims into content for public consumption. This creates a dangerous illusion of impunity, where the line between virtual validation and real-world criminality is blurred, potentially contributing to tragedies like school bullying, gang rapes and even murder.

When harmful behaviour is gamified, shared and left unpunished in the digital realm, it loses its sense of gravity in the physical world.

**Wisdom of Confucius**

Malaysia is not navigating uncharted waters. In the late 1970s, following a period of social upheaval, there was a concerted national effort to embed moral education within the school curriculum.

This was a proactive, society-wide recognition that academic excellence alone could not guarantee a harmonious and ethical citizenry. We must rekindle that spirit of collective responsibility now.

In this endeavour, the ancient wisdom of Chinese philosopher Confucius remains profoundly relevant. He famously stated: "The strength of a nation is derived from the integrity of its homes". This underscores that character building begins not in the classroom but in the living room.

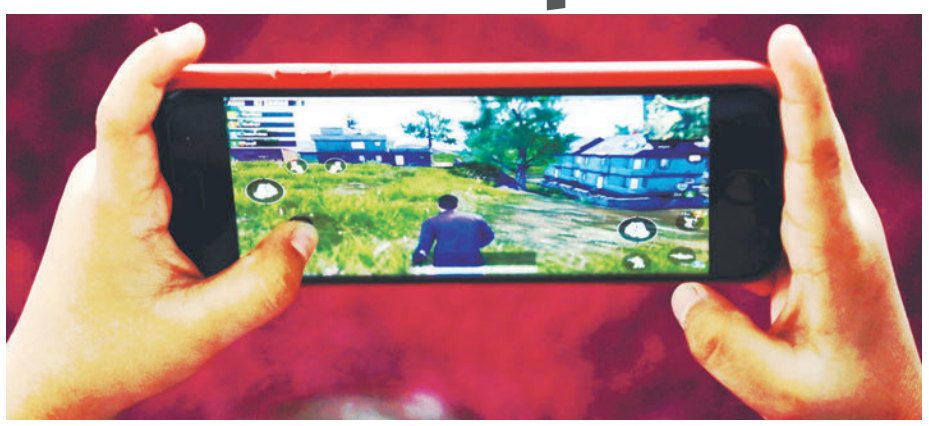
A child's first and most influential moral educators are their parents. A parent takes care of a few children while a teacher in class may have 20 to 40 charges. A child usually spends far more time at home with their parents than in school with a teacher.

Confucius also emphasised the importance of leading by example: "When a prince's personal conduct is correct, his government is effective without the issuing of orders. If his personal conduct is not correct, he may issue orders but they will not be followed." This principle applies equally to parents and teachers. We cannot lecture on values we do not embody.

**Beyond textbooks**

For moral education to be more than just another grade on a report card, its delivery must be dynamic, practical and holistic, especially in countering digital pitfalls.

➔ ***Parents and teachers as role models:*** The most powerful moral lesson is consistent example. Children are astute observers of adult behaviour. Parents must demonstrate honesty, empathy and respect in their daily interactions, including their use of technology.



The violent acts in our schools are a tragic reflection of a lapse that extends beyond school gates, deep into the digital spaces our children inhabit. – ***SUNPIC***

> *"To address this, we must revisit and significantly strengthen the role of moral education, not just as a subject in school, but also as a lived value championed collectively by parents and educators."*

Similarly, teachers must be supported to reclaim their moral authority – respected not just for their knowledge but also for their character.

➔ ***Interactive and experiential learning:*** The curriculum must incorporate digital literacy and ethics, moving beyond rote memorisation, using:

1. Role-play: Allow students to navigate scenarios involving cyberbullying, peer pressure to share explicit content or online ethical dilemmas.

2. Simulations and case studies: Analyse real-world cases of online harassment and its real-life consequences to build critical thinking and empathy.

3. Community service: Link learning to action by involving students in projects that foster real-world connection and social responsibility, countering digital isolation.

4. Whole-school, whole-family approach: Moral education cannot be confined to 40 minutes. Schools must create an ecosystem that reinforces positive values and digital citizenship. Crucially, this must be supported by parallel awareness campaigns for parents, guiding them on monitoring digital exposure, having open conversations about consent and respect, and modelling healthy online behaviour themselves.

**Collective duty**

The violent acts in our schools are a tragic reflection of a lapse that extends beyond school gates, deep into the digital spaces our children inhabit.

While the Education Ministry must review disciplinary frameworks and integrate digital ethics into teaching, society cannot outsource character building to the system alone. Parents have a bigger and more fundamental responsibility to lay the ethical foundation and guide their children's digital journey.

Let this moment be a catalyst. By combining the structured efforts of our schools with the unwavering, daily commitment of parents, we can begin to mend and strengthen the moral fabric of our youths.

It is a duty we share to ensure our schools remain safe havens for learning and character formation, and our homes the primary crucible where virtue is forged from a young age.

***Dr Gan Siowck Lee*** *is a former education professor.*
*Comments: letters@thesundaily.com*

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# M'sian passport slays, diplomacy pays




*"If we want to keep that reputation shining, our leadership at every level needs to mirror that same quality. Leaders must lead with empathy, not ego; with curiosity, not condescension. The world respects consistency, not slogans."*

**WELL,** well, darlings, Malaysia's maroon passport is flexing again! Ranked among the world's most powerful in 2025, it is now practically a golden ticket.

We can stroll into 180 countries visa-free or visa-on-arrival, flash that passport like Beyoncé at the Grammys, and boom – "Welcome to Paris, Miss Malaysia".

Aren't we proud? Of course, we are! But here's the cheeky question lurking in *Makcik*'s mind: Our passport opens doors globally, yes, but can our leadership keep those doors open sustainably?

Because, *sayang*, the world may adore our charm but diplomacy and perception are fragile. It takes one tone-deaf policy, one careless quote or one viral scandal to make those visa waivers disappear faster than free buffet food at a government seminar.

**A symbol of who we are**

Our passport isn't just paper and laminate; it is our reputation in travel form. It says, "We're trusted, we're friendly, we play nice with others". That ranking didn't happen overnight; it's the result of decades of careful diplomacy, neutrality and Malaysia's special talent for being the peacemaker in a noisy neighbourhood.

But this honour, darling, is not just for the foreign ministry to flex at high-level briefings; it is also a mirror for our domestic leadership – a reminder that trust, like visa privileges, must be earned and maintained.

When the world sees Malaysians travelling freely, they are not just seeing citizens; they are seeing the product of leadership decisions that kept our image clean, our borders stable and our diplomacy consistent. With the Asean Summit happening now, that symbolism couldn't be louder.

**Leadership, Asean-style**

Every Asean gathering comes with the same question whispered over *teh tarik*: Who's leading and who's following?

True leadership isn't about who speaks the loudest at the podium or whose motorcade has more police escorts; it is about who listens, who builds bridges and who brings calm when others bring chaos.

Malaysia has long been seen as the voice of reason – a country that can talk to everyone, without shouting at anyone. That is our secret sauce, *sayang*! A little humility, a lot of diplomacy and a pinch of "okay-*lah*, let's find middle ground".

If we want to keep that reputation shining, our leadership at every level needs to mirror that same quality. Leaders must lead with empathy, not ego; with curiosity, not condescension. The world respects consistency, not slogans.

**Domestic grace, global respect**

Let's be honest: you can't build global respect if your house is messy. Good governance, accountability and unity at home translate into credibility abroad.

If our leaders showed the same care managing the *rakyat*'s concerns as they do arranging bilateral photo ops, we'd be unstoppable.

Imagine if policy decisions were treated with the same urgency as an Asean flight itinerary, we'd have solved half our national headaches by now.

The world doesn't judge Malaysia by our airports or skyscrapers, *sayang*; they judge us by how we treat our people, our environment and our neighbours.

A good passport gets us into the room but good leadership makes others want to keep us there.

**Lessons from the 'maroon book'**

Maybe, just maybe, our passport can teach our leaders a few lessons.

Lesson One: It travels far because it respects rules.

Lesson Two: It's welcomed everywhere because it doesn't make drama.

Lesson Three: It gets renewed every five years – a gentle reminder that power, too, should never be assumed as permanent.

See, darling, leadership and passports have one thing in common – both require renewal, responsibility and a bit of humility. You can't just hold it up for photos – you must live up to what it represents.

**Way forward**

As the Asean Summit unfolds – with cameras flashing, speeches flowing and batik shirts gleaming – the Marinated Makcik humbly hopes our leaders remember this:

Malaysia's global reputation is like its *sambal* – balanced, bold and best when handled with care. Lead with sincerity, nurture public trust and maintain the respect that our passport symbolises. At the end of the day, it's not about how many countries we can enter; it's about how many hearts and partners we can keep. And darling, that's the kind of world power you can't laminate.

*Makcik*'s closing kicker: A strong passport opens borders but a strong Malaysia opens minds, builds bridges and earns respect that no visa can buy.

***Azura Abas*** *is the associate editor of theSun. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com*

# Time to invest in stronger care infrastructure

COMMENT
by Timothy Tan Jee Vin

**WE** grow up hearing the same advice again and again: save money, invest wisely and plan for retirement. These are good tips but they don't paint the full picture.

They all assume that when we get old, the right places and systems will already be there to support us. The truth is, in Malaysia, that kind of care infrastructure isn't ready yet, at least not at the scale or quality we'll need.

Look at the numbers: in 2024, 11.6% of Malaysians were aged 60 and above. By 2040, it's expected to pass 17%.

Twelve states are already considered ageing. By 2030, millions more Malaysians will be elderly and many will be living with long-term health problems like diabetes, high blood pressure and heart disease. Some will also face dementia or struggle to move around easily. These are not just statistics; they are our parents today and they will be us in a few decades.

Three big gaps make this a real concern: not enough trained caregivers and proper facilities, huge differences between urban and rural areas, and the cost barrier that locks out many middle-income families.

For example, nursing home fees in Malaysia can range from around RM1,500 a month to more than RM12,000, depending on the location and quality. That shows good care is possible but it is often too expensive. Many families are stuck in the middle, not poor enough for subsidies and not rich enough for private care.

This is more than a social issue; it's an economic one too. When we don't have a strong elder-care system, the hidden costs pile up.

Adult children, often the main earners, may have to cut their working hours or quit their jobs to care for their parents. Productivity drops, companies lose skilled workers and healthcare costs rise when untreated conditions get worse.



Depending only on family care isn't realistic anymore. It is not about abandoning our values; it's about updating how we practise them. – ***AMIRUL SYAFIQ/THESUN***

A proper elder-care sector would do the opposite. It would create jobs for caregivers, nurses, therapists and administrators, and open up new markets for products and services aimed at seniors.

Right now, Malaysia relies heavily on foreign caregivers. But countries like Singapore and Hong Kong pay better, so they attract more workers. Unless we train more locals and improve the pay and working conditions, we will keep facing shortages.

Our health system also lacks geriatric specialists, and most of them are in big cities. Smaller towns and rural areas, even Felda settlements with many elderly residents, are often left behind.

There are other risks, too. Seniors who live alone can easily become victims of scams or abuse. Climate change makes things worse. Heatwaves and floods can be deadly for elderly people who can't move quickly or cool down easily. Without safe and climate-resilient community spaces, many of them are left in unsafe homes.

Culturally, we often say children should take care of their parents. That value is beautiful and important but times have changed. Families are smaller, more women are working and many young people move away for studies or jobs. Depending only on family care isn't realistic anymore. It is not about abandoning our values; it's about updating how we practise them.

This does not mean we should just copy what other countries do. Malaysia needs its own model. Imagine villages where elders still teach skills, cook together, help children with homework and contribute to their community. They shouldn't just be cared for but should also stay active and valued.

The government has made some initiatives, like digital literacy classes for seniors, community transport and the upcoming Elderly Persons Bill. There is also a National Senior Citizens Action Plan and talk of a dedicated ministry. These are good starts but without enough buildings, trained people and proper funding, the impact will be limited.

To my fellow Malaysians who are saving for retirement: saving money alone isn't enough. Without a proper care infrastructure, that money may not be enough to protect us later.

To investors and policymakers: this is a predictable trend. The demand is guaranteed. Building the elder-care ecosystem isn't charity; it's an investment that supports families, protects dignity and creates long-term jobs.

For me, this issue feels personal. When I visit my grandparents, I see not just their health problems but also their loneliness. Sometimes when I picture an empty chair at the kitchen table, I'm afraid about what will happen when they are gone. If we don't want an empty chair at home, we should not accept a lacking system.

Malaysia has built roads, ports and skyscrapers. Those things shaped our future. It is time to build something just as important – the infrastructure of care. Not because we pity the elderly but because we want an inclusive society that takes care of all its members, including our future selves.

***Timothy Tan Jee Vin*** *is a final-year undergraduate student in physics at the Faculty of Science, Universiti Malaya. Comments: letters@thesundaily.com*

BY **DHARSHINI GANESON**

# Foundation empowers and uplifts indigenous communities

## Orang Asli achieve success with funding for projects

**WHILE** indigenous communities in Malaysia struggle on many fronts such as education, sourcing for income-generating projects to fund their communities, the RYTHM foundation has successfully made a difference by implementing a series of projects.

Over three years across Sabah, Pahang, Kedah, Johor and Negeri Sembilan, RYTHM worked with partners to uplift the Orang Asli (OA) communities in various strategic areas.

One success story, Imelda Kasung from the mist shrouded highlands of Kiulu, Sabah can stand proud with her home-made bottle of "Sambal Liposu", made from forest chilis that grow naturally in the area.

With funding from RYTHM, Imelda was able to learn how to bottle and market the "Kiulu Kio" label and achieve a level of success in marketing and selling the item.

This is only part of the work carried out by the foundation.

The diverse communities from the Dusun, Bateq, Kensiu, Jakun and Semelai indigenous people across five states have also experienced dramatic upward changes in their literacy rates as children participate in tuition classes after school, while youth and women have succeeded in generating income that has not only increased but tripled household income.

Datin Sri Umayal Eswaran, chairperson of RYTHM foundation said: "Our work with the OA is not about charity but about solidarity. At the foundation, we believe empowerment means listening before we lead and walk beside communities as partners.

"Every project we support – from classrooms in Pahang to eco-tourism in Kedah is an investment in dignity, resilience, and a future where indigenous voices are not only heard but honoured."



The Orang Asli children receive additional classes to improve their literacy skills, especially reading and writing.

**Academic support programme (ASP)**

Among the initiatives were to provide after school tuition, with high rates of attendance achieved over three years. Results showed that over 98 percent of (OA) students in the programme were able to display mastery in the areas of reading, writing and comprehension.

**Youth empowerment programme (YEP)**

The concept behind the YEP was to set up ecotourism ventures in three villages, Watu Kokoluton Hill (also known as Kg Talantang), located in Kota Marudu, Sabah, Sangod Hill (Kg Lokub) and Ratau Campsite (Kg Ratau), both located at Kiulu Sabah.

The youths located at these places have benefitted from skills development, while fostering a sense of ownership and pride in their communities. These eco-ventures have succeeded in attracting international tourists, looking for adventure and local culture, and contribute to environmental conservation.

All three of these projects have contributed collectively to generating a gross income amounting to RM 44,000, over three years, thus ensuring a steady income for youths. The membership of youth connect circle YCC) composed of local youth, has also increased from 12 members to 22.

These sessions were valuable as they equipped the youths in the locality with the knowledge needed to work in the local ecotourism industry as tour guides.

Since the inception of these ecotourism ventures, the numbers of international tourists has picked up in tourist destinations across Sabah.

**Women empowerment programmes**

The purpose behind OA women empowerment programmes by RYTHM foundation is to create a source of income for the women, which would give them financial independence and a sense of pride in generating an income on their own.

There were preliminary discussions held with the women in the locality of Kg Ratau, Kg Talantang and kg Lokub in Sabah, to determine what economic ventures would be most suitable.

Together the OA women also formed a Kiulu community collective enterprise (KCCE) with representation from all three villages.

With the brand name of "Kiulu Kio" they ventured into creating and marketing two products in their locality, which was the 'Liposo' fruit known as the Sabah apple and banana stem.

Thus, the lives, educational opportunities and income levels of the OA students, women and youths have been uplifted with grants allocated by RYTHM foundation towards the betterment of the indigenous community.

# Winner of outstanding booth design

**TUNKU** Abdul Rahman University of Management and Technology (TAR UMT) was in the spotlight when an idea born from a collective of 49 bachelor of science in architecture (Hons) students won most outstanding booth design. The entry bagged three awards at the Pertubuhan Arkitek Malaysia (PAM) Annual Architecture Student Works Exhibition (PAASWE) 2025.

TAR UMT's outstanding design, 'Islands in Resonance' stood out among the 20 display booths and was conferred Best Bench award, Best Use of Materials (jury citation) award, and Gold in Best Booth award. The exhibition held from 8 – 12 Oct 2025 was showcased in a local mall.

PAASWE, an annual event, organised by PAM aims to create public awareness about the architecture industry in Malaysia, while providing a platform for architecture students to showcase their work to the public.

Desmond Leong Li Heng, one of the student participants said their booth concept visualised individuality within unity, much like islands in an archipelago. This concept directly mirrored the competition's theme, "Archipelago: Shared Roots of Malaysian Architecture" and was inspired by the team's own experience of working to achieve cohesion while respecting each member's unique contribution.

"I think the biggest challenge was coming to an agreement on an idea that everyone would be happy with. We took about two weeks to settle on a design, and another two weeks to complete the construction of the booth, but all that hard work and effort paid off in the end," he said.

The team's unique approach, creative idea and functional design resonated with the judging panel that consisted of PAM council members and professional architects from across the nation.

"Compared to the other booths, ours demonstrated a practical bench component and we successfully highlighted the unique features of the sponsored materials composed of clay roof tiles and fibre cement boards. I believe the judges picked up on those details which helped our booth stand out from the rest," said Koh Chua Ivan, leader of the team.

Megat Ariff Shah Megat Omar, lecturer from the faculty of built environment (FOBE), was proud that his students were able to take their creative ideas and translate them into an award-winning structure.



Han Wei Yang (centre), one of TAR UMT's architecture students, presenting the design concept and idea behind 'Islands in Resonance' to the judging panel.

"The students showed perseverance and flexibility in handling various challenges presented to them, such as budgeting, material procurement, and design issues, all while preserving their design vision. The judges were very impressed with their approach, creativity, design language and practical application of their booth, especially the bench and material selection.

"Competitions such as PAASWE are essential to students' growth as it allows fostering of teamwork, clear communication and real-life creative problem solving, which may be harder to instill via typical coursework.

"Through exposure to collaborative works in competitions, better prepared to tackle the challenges in the industries as soon as they enter the workforce," said Megat.

***Call** 603-4145 0123/011-1075 8535, or log on to www.tarc.edu.my for more information about TAR UMT or to apply online. Various financial aid and merit scholarships are available for qualified students .*

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

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# Potential to create more regional MNCs: Liew

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The introduction of Asean Business Entity (ABE) status has the potential to create more Asean multinational companies that can enhance market opportunities in the region, said Deputy Investment, Trade and Industry Minister, Liew Chin Tong.

He said the idea of implementing ABE was proposed by Malaysia as the Asean Chair in 2025 and has also been included as one of the initiatives under Budget 2026.

"With the ABE, our hope is that one day there will be more Asean MNCs, so that we are no longer solely reliant on MNCs from the West or other countries.

"These Asean MNCs can undertake economic and industrial activities among Asean member states and create a stronger regional market," he said during a question-and-answer session in the Dewan Rakyat yesterday.

He was responding to a supplementary question from Datuk Wan Saifulruddin Wan Jan (PN–Tasek Gelugor) regarding the government's efforts to assure investors that Malaysia remains committed to free market principles and an open economy, particularly within the Asean framework.

Responding to Wan Saifulruddin's original question on strategies to reduce non-tariff barriers, Liew said Asean remains committed to efforts aimed at reducing such barriers to strengthen regional economic integration.

This is also to ensure that the benefits of trade are enjoyed inclusively, including by micro, small, and medium enterprises.

He emphasised that several steps have been and are being taken by Asean to achieve this objective, including the establishment of the Sectoral Coordinating Committee on the Implementation of the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement and the Asean Trade Facilitation Joint Consultative Committee.

In addition, the Asean Single Window regional digital platform has been established to facilitate the electronic exchange of customs and trade documents between countries.

"Next is the preparation of Guidelines for the Implementation of Asean Commitments on Non-Tariff Measures on Goods, the Mutual Recognition Arrangement, and the upgrading of the Asean Trade in Goods Agreement," he added. – Bernama

# ABE – driving integration through corporate channels

## Nazir: Malaysia champions Asean Business Entity to enable greater cross-border mobility, collaboration via innovation at company level

BY **JOHN GILBERT**
*sunbiz@thesundaily.com*

**KUALA LUMPUR:** The idea of an Asean Business Entity (ABE), in a rapidly evolving regional landscape, is emerging as a forward-looking vision for the next phase of economic integration.

Spearheaded by Malaysia and elevated under Budget 2026, the proposal seeks to enable greater mobility and collaboration across borders – not through political reform, but through pragmatic corporate innovation.

"We cannot politically have free movement of people or corporations across Asean – it's just not feasible right now. But what we can do is make it possible at the company level," Asean-BAC Malaysia chair and founding partner of Ikhlas Capital Tan Sri Nazir Razak told delegates at the Asean Indo-Pacific Forum 2025 yesterday.

Building on the groundwork laid during Indonesia's 2023 chairmanship, Malaysia has placed the ABE concept "front and centre of our agenda".

Nazir also highlighted the government's strong commitment to institutionalise this initiative.

The vision is simple yet transformative: companies recognised as ABE could enjoy more unrestricted movement of talent, capital, and operations within the region, unlocking a new model of integration suited to the Indo-Pacific era.

"If you imagine under an ABE, once recognised, you can have free movement of people. You can outsource operations. It is a practical pathway towards the economic unity we have always aspired to," he said.

Nazir elaborated that the concept of the ABE could extend well beyond regional borders, even finding relevance within the broader Indo-Pacific framework. "This idea is not limited to Asean. It can also be extended to the Indo-Pacific platform, where the same principle applies – integration through corporate channels rather than political ones."

The system would remain regulated, ensuring national sovereignty is respected, Nazir said.

"Of course, if you are just a normal worker, the usual visa rules apply. But for recognised entities, this gives real substance to the idea that we are, in effect, one economy," he added.

Nazir noted that while Asean is often portrayed as a unified market of 700 million people, the reality for many investors is quite different.

"A lot of foreign investors come to Malaysia or Asean and say, 'You told me this was a market of 700 million people. But when I arrive, it is so fragmented, it is difficult to move goods, and even harder to move people," he said.

That, he explained, is precisely why Malaysia has championed the ABE concept – a practical way to bridge those gaps at the company level rather than through complex political reforms.

"I thought, why can't we start this at least at the company level? And that's exactly what Malaysia has done," he said.

Nazir shared that the idea has already gained international attention. "I had the opportunity of discussing this concept with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) managing director Kristalina Georgieva, and she found it relevant not only for Asean but for regional platforms around the world."

The IMF has agreed to conduct a study on the ABE concept, though Nazir stressed that the idea is simple enough to move forward without delay.

"We don't need to wait for that study. What is important now is to act. I truly hope the Asean-Indo-Pacific Task Force can consider that ABE should stand for Asean Indo-Pacific Business Entity – because if we can achieve that, it would be a meaningful outcome from this conference," he said.




Albanese delivering the special head-of-state address at the Asean Indo-Pacific Forum 2025 yesterday. – ***BERNAMAPIC***

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In his special head-of-state address, Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said in the spirit of Asean's long-standing tradition of cooperation, leaders gather here with a shared purpose – to deepen partnerships for mutual prosperity.

"The true strength and resilience of our economies, as Nazir Razak highlighted, do not come from turning inwards but from looking outwards.

"The best way to enhance the security and resilience of our economies is to deepen and diversify our trade ties, strengthen economic cooperation, and build closer bonds between our citizens," Albanese said.

He emphasised that such progress cannot be achieved through agreements or declarations alone.

"Real advancement is measured not in the documents we sign, but in acts of practical partnerships — in new businesses being established, new energy and infrastructure projects taking shape, new investments in manufacturing, and in the friendships we build through education and cultural exchange," Albanese said.

It is through these tangible actions that Asean's collective growth and unity will continue to flourish, he added.

Albanese said as a pro-trading nation with an outward-looking economy, Australia stands ready to play its part in shaping this transformation and embracing the opportunities that lie ahead.

He noted that this year marks the 70th anniversary of Australia's diplomatic relationship with Malaysia, a milestone that reflects the depth of trust and cooperation built over generations.

Albanese said that over the past seven decades, both nations and the broader region have undergone extraordinary change, reshaping not only economies but also perspectives. These shifts, in turn, have transformed how Australia views its role in the region.

"For much of its modern history, Australia considered itself constrained by the 'tyranny of distance,' its prosperity tied to markets far away – in the United Kingdom, Europe, and the US. Today, that outlook has evolved as Australia embraces its place within a dynamic, interconnected Indo-Pacific community," he said.

# Brazil seeks stronger economic, business cooperation with Malaysia

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Brazil is seeking to boost its trade potential with Malaysia and has called on businesses from both countries to deepen cooperation and strengthen trade growth, said Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva yesterday.

Speaking at a media conference in conjunction with the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits yesterday, Lula da Silva acknowledged that the private sector was a true engine of bilateral growth.

"It is the businessmen who know how to negotiate, who have their own interests as well as knowledge and therefore, the government's role is to ensure that in every line of business, we bring a delegation of Brazilian entrepreneurs," he said.

The Brazilian president pointed out that bilateral trade between Brazil and its key partner nations, including Malaysia, stood at around US$12 billion (RM50.5 billion), but described it as very little compared to the economic power of these markets.

Lula da Silva called for greater boldness among Brazilian officials and corporate leaders to expand their presence abroad and actively promote the nation's industrial capabilities.

In 2024, Brazil was Malaysia's second-largest trading partner in Latin America, with total bilateral trade amounting to RM20.36 billion.

Malaysia's exports included electrical and electronic products, palm oil, rubber and halal pharmaceuticals, while its imports comprised ores, processed food and petroleum products.

Lula da Silva was in Kuala Lumpur to attend the 47th Asean Summit and Related Summits. Brazil has been a sectoral dialogue partner of Asean since 2022.

Over 25 years, trade between Brazil and Asean has increased more than 16 times. In 2000, Brazil's trade flow into Asean was US$2.3 billion and last year, it reached US$37.2 billion. – Bernama

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# Asean payment connectivity seen as key to MSME growth

## Dana Indonesia CEO says interoperability between platforms will help unlock market of over 700 million consumers

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Closer digital payment connectivity across Asean is expected to unlock new growth opportunities for micro, small and medium enterprises and strengthen the Southeast Asian region's economic integration, according to Dana Indonesia CEO and co-founder Vince Iswara.

He said regional payment links, including the use of a common quick response (QR) code standard and the upcoming Project Nexus, are set to expand cross-border transactions, making it easier for consumers and MSMEs to trade and travel across Asean.

Dana Indonesia is a leading financial technology company that operates one of the country's largest digital wallet platforms, with more than 200 million users nationwide.

"It is very important to highlight that the digital economy across Asean already stands at about US$1.2 trillion and that's just from the Asean-6 countries, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Vietnam. If we include the rest of Asean, it would be even larger, with far greater potential.

"The challenge is that without regional connectivity, every country still operates its own domestic system. We are unlocking national potential in areas like SMEs and retail markets, but it will be much stronger once we are fully interconnected across the region," Vince explained.

He said this in a panel session at the Asean Indo-Pacific Forum (AIPF), discussing "Regional Cross-Border Sustainable Development Through the Asean Common Carbon Framework, Asean Power Grid and Cross-Border Payment", held on the sidelines of the 47th Asean Summit here yesterday.

The session also featured other distinguished panellists comprising Bursa Malaysia CEO and Kuala Lumpur Business Club deputy president Datuk Fad'l Mohamed and Asean Centre for Energy executive director Datuk Abdul Razib Dawood.

Vince said interoperability between payment platforms will help unlock a market of over 700 million consumers, giving MSMEs direct access to buyers beyond their home country.

"MSMEs contribute between 40% and 60% of gross domestic product in most Asean economies and employ the majority of the workforce. Seamless payment systems are essential to integrate them into regional value chains," he remarked.

Citing Asean tourism flows, Vince said 143 million people travelled within the region in 2024, with 44% being intra-Asean travellers, showing the clear benefits of frictionless QR payments in local currencies.

He noted that digital payments are also more environmentally friendly compared with cash-based transactions, as they reduce the energy footprint and logistical waste associated with physical money handling.

However, Vince warned that deeper connectivity requires stronger cybersecurity cooperation, as cross-border digital ecosystems are increasingly targeted by scams and fraud.

"By collaborating among central banks and fintech players, and by standardising security responses, Asean can protect its ecosystem and ensure inclusive, resilient growth," he said.

The Asean regional payment connectivity initiative, launched in 2022, currently links QR systems among Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and the Philippines, with expansion planned to other member states as well as partners such as Japan, South Korea, India and China.

The initiative aligns with the Asean Digital Economy Framework Agreement, targeted for conclusion this year, which aims to deepen regional digital integration and enhance cross-border trade, tourism and financial inclusion. – Bernama

# Endorsement from bloc's members crucial to advance carbon framework: Bursa Malaysia CEO

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Endorsement from Asean member states will be vital to ensure the success of the Asean Common Carbon Framework (ACCF) implementation, said Bursa Malaysia CEO Datuk Fad'l Mohamed.

He said the initiative, which has been in development over a tight 12- to 18-month timeline, aimed to be operationalised at a granular level, with methodologies, interoperability and policy discussions forming part of its next phase.

"To make this a success, we will need some level of endorsement from Asean. That's the next objective, (which is) to get each member state to sign on it, operationalise it at a granular level, develop methodologies, discuss interoperability and look at policies."

Fad'l said this during a panel discussion on "Regional Cross-Border Sustainable Development through the Asean Common Carbon Framework, Asean Power Grid (APG) and Cross-Border Payment" at the Asean-Indo-Pacific Forum 2025 here yesterday.

Other panellists were Asean Centre for Energy executive director Datuk Abdul Razib Dawood and Dana Indonesia CEO and co-founder Vince Iswara.

Fad'l, who is also the Kuala Lumpur Business Club deputy president, said much of the ACCF's progress has been driven by the private sector through collaboration among five associations that signed a memorandum of collaboration to push the initiative forward.

He added that the initiative reflects the region's shared ambition to achieve net-zero targets and enhance liquidity through interoperability among Asean member states.

"I'm confident this initiative will continue beyond Malaysia's chairmanship, as other Asean member states are equally vested in ensuring its success," he said, adding that collaboration with other partners would come naturally as the carbon market develops and more projects are launched.



Fad'l (left) speaking during a panel discussion titled 'Regional Cross-Border Sustainable Development through the Asean Common Carbon Framework, Asean Power Grid, and Cross-Border Payment' at the Asean-Indo-Pacific Forum 2025 in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. – ***BERNAMAPIC***

Meanwhile, Abdul Razib said Asean member states have agreed to move forward with implementing the new enhanced memorandum of understanding for the APG following the recent 43rd Asean Ministers of Energy Meeting.

"Ten Asean members agreed to move towards implementation, instead of escalations and so on. They are going to set up important task forces looking at the challenges of regulatory issues across borders and technical issues, as well as the commercial issues," he added.

Abdul Razib said the new task forces would play a key role in shaping the regulatory framework and future market design for the APG, supported by multilateral development banks and private financiers under the APG Financing Initiative.

He said the move reflects a renewed political commitment by Asean members to accelerate the long-discussed power grid project through a coordinated and regulatory-led approach. – Bernama

# Insights Analytics bidding for four active tenders worth RM27.8m

BY **HAYATUN RAZAK**
*sunbiz@thesundaily.com*

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Sarawak-based technology solutions provider Insights Analytics Bhd is bidding for four active tenders worth RM27.8 million, mainly for water sector projects.

Insights Analytics managing director Frank Wee said it is working on small-scale pilot implementations of its proprietary technologies before full deployment.

"Beyond conventional bidding, we are focusing on implementing proof-of-concept and proof-of-value projects. If those prove successful, we could potentially qualify for a waiver of tender and proceed via direct negotiation with the government. That's an opportunity we're actively eyeing, especially for technologies that are uniquely ours," he told a press conference after the company's debut on the ACE Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities yesterday.

Wee explained, "These figures fluctuate, tenders come and go, depending on what's available and whether the margins make sense for us."

The company's shares opened at 62 sen compared to the initial public offering (IPO) price of 36 sen per share, a premium of 72%..

Insights Analytics has an unbilled order book of about RM35.3 million expected to be recognised over six years.

Wee is optimistic of its growth prospects, supported by rising demand for smart water management systems and Malaysia's accelerating digital transformation agenda.

The company believes it is well-positioned to capitalise on national and state-led initiatives that aim to modernise the country's water infrastructure, strengthen digital resilience, and promote sustainable urban development.

Wee said the company's solutions are directly aligned with government programmes such as the National Non-Revenue Water Programme (2025-2030), the Sarawak Alternative Water Supply (Sawas) Initiative, the Water Sector Transformation 2040 and Sarawak's RM20 billion Smart Water Infrastructure Blueprint.

"These long-term initiatives are creating a strong pipeline of projects for the water industry.

With our proven technology and track record, Insights Analytics is well positioned to play a meaningful role in supporting Malaysia's water transformation and digitalisation goals," said Wee.

In line with its expansion strategy, Insights Analytics will acquire a new corporate office in Kuching, featuring a mini data centre to strengthen its digital infrastructure and service capacity.

The mini data centre will provide clients, especially small and medium enterprises, with a hybrid or cloud-based platform to host and manage their software and applications.

"Our goal is to empower more organisations to adopt digital solutions without the burden of managing hardware or in-house IT infrastructure," he said, adding that the mini data centre will help them deliver greater flexibility, reliability, and value to their customers.

Beyond Sarawak, Insights Analytics is expanding its presence in Peninsular Malaysia to capture new opportunities in water and digital infrastructure projects nationwide.

Insights Analytics raised RM43.56 million from its public issue of 121 million new shares at an issue price of 36 sen per share.

The IPO included an offer for sale of 27.5 million existing shares to Bumiputera investors approved by the Investment, Trade and Industry Ministry via private placement.

At an IPO price of 36 sen per share, Insights Analytics' market capitalisation stood at RM198 million upon listing, based on its enlarged share capital of 550 million shares.

M&A Securities Sdn Bhd is the adviser, sponsor, underwriter and placement agent for the IPO exercise.

# FMM lauds Miti for sealing M'sia-US reciprocal trade deal

## Agreement a balanced framework safeguarding access to the United States, strengthening industry, says manufacturers group

**PETALING JAYA:** In recognition of a major milestone for Malaysia's trade relations, the Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers (FMM) has lauded the Ministry of Investment, Trade and Industry for its unwavering effort in bringing the US-Malaysia Reciprocal Trade Agreement to fruition.

FMM president Tan Sri Soh Thian Lai (*pic*) said the association recognised that the discussions were exceedingly challenging and required careful balancing of Malaysia's interests and evolving global trade pressures.



"FMM remains committed to working closely with the government and stakeholders to translate the agreement's terms into tangible gains for the manufacturing base, including small and medium-sized enterprises," Soh said in a statement.

Under the agreement, the US will maintain a 19% tariff on Malaysian-origin goods, with significant exemptions for 1,711 tariff lines of Malaysian exports. These exemptions cover key sectors such as palm oil, rubber products, cocoa, aircraft components and pharmaceutical-related items, collectively valued at about US$5.2 billion (RM21.9 billion) or some 12% of Malaysia's exports to the US.

Soh said this outcome safeguards critical export sectors and provides continued market access while the government and industry strengthen domestic competitiveness.

"Without this agreement, Malaysia would have been exposed to a wave of new US tariff measures announced in recent months."

The US has proposed 100% tariffs on semiconductor imports from firms that do not move production to America, 50% tariffs on kitchen cabinets and bathroom products and 30% tariffs on upholstered furniture.

Soh noted that there have also been signals of future action on branded or patented pharmaceuticals not supported by production in the US.

He said these measures reflect a broader strategy to push manufacturing back to the US and impose higher costs on producers operating abroad.

"The reciprocal trade agreement protects Malaysian exporters from being caught in these sweeping actions and ensure continued access to the US market under stable and predictable conditions.

"The agreement takes effect once it enters into force, but its implementation will be gradual. Malaysia's tariff reductions and related commitments will be introduced in stages to ensure adjustments occur smoothly over several years," said Soh.

He noted that this phased approach applies across product categories and includes changes to excise duties, sales and service tax, and technical and pharmaceutical standards.

The timeline allows Malaysian industries and regulators to build capacity, upgrade systems, and adapt to new rules while giving businesses room to invest, raise efficiency and align with international standards. This structured transition reflects Malaysia's careful negotiation strategy to safeguard domestic industries while positioning them for deeper integration into global supply chains.

The framework also provides clarity and stability for investors, encouraging collaboration between Malaysian and US firms in high-value manufacturing and digital sectors.

"The bottom line is that the agreement gives Malaysia's manufacturing sector breathing space, continuity of market access and a stronger foundation for investment.

"The challenge now is to turn these terms into concrete results. Industry and government must work together to accelerate capacity building, move up the value chain and fully leverage the exemption and implementation package to enhance Malaysia's competitive position," said Soh.

# TRX: Budget 2026 a strong push for investment

**PETALING JAYA:** Tun Razak Exchange (TRX), Malaysia's International Financial Centre (IFC), welcomes the government's continued commitment to strengthen Malaysia's investment landscape through Budget 2026.

Budget 2026 anchored on the Madani Economy Framework sets out nine key commitments centred on three core thrusts. One of these thrusts, raising the ceiling of national growth, outlines several priorities that directly align with TRX's mission such as championing a high-value economy, bridging gaps to create opportunity, and spurring Malaysia's innovation ecosystem to accelerate the nation's economic transformation.

TRX City Sdn Bhd CEO Datuk Azmar Talib (*pic*) said the measures to further ease investor facilitation, enhance talent mobility, and introduce the Asean Business Entity status reflect a bold, forward-looking approach to attract high-value investors and skilled professionals from around the world.

"Budget 2026 sends a clear signal that Malaysia is open for business and ready to compete globally. The government's focus on investor facilitation and talent mobility will create new opportunities for high-value investment and cross-border collaboration. At TRX, we're proud to complement these efforts by offering a world-class ecosystem that is built for business and designed for life, where global firms can innovate, scale and thrive," he said.



Together with the Investor Pass and continuation of the Residence Pass Talent Fast Track, these initiatives align strongly with TRX's vision to position Kuala Lumpur as a leading IFC and a regional hub for capital, talent, and innovation.

He added that the government's modernisation of Islamic finance – through initiatives such as digital sukuk tokenisation, Climate Sukuk and blended finance mechanisms – reinforces Malaysia's leadership in sustainable finance and innovation.

"As Malaysia's IFC, TRX is designed to serve as the pilot precinct for these ambitions. Our ecosystem today has reached 80% occupancy based on net lettable area, with the landmark Exchange 106 tower housing 90% international tenants, including multinationals that have established their regional headquarters and centres of excellence here, half of which are in finance and technology-related services. This vibrant mix of businesses is supported by future-ready infrastructure and sustainable urban design, creating a complete environment for work, life, and innovation," he said.

TRX has attracted over RM8 billion in investments and now hosts over 20,000 knowledge workers. This growth mirrors Malaysia's climb in the IMD World Competitiveness Ranking, where the country rose 11 places to 23rd, its best standing since 2020.

"Budget 2026 reflects the government's intent to build a more dynamic and globally connected financial and business ecosystem. We thank the government for policies that continue to enhance Malaysia's ease of doing business, and we look forward to deepening partnerships across the public and private sectors to realise the nation's long-term economic vision under RMK-13 (13th Malaysia Plan," he said.

# MISC manages two new-gen LNG carriers for QatarEnergy

**PETALING JAYA:** MISC Bhd, together with consortium partners Nippon Yusen Kabushiki Kaisha (NYK), Kawasaki Kisen Kaisha Ltd (K-Line) and China LNG Shipping (Holdings) Ltd (CLNG), recently named two new-generation liquefied natural gas (LNG) carriers *Mihzem* and *Idd Al Shargi*.

Constructed by Hudong-Zhonghua Shipbuilding Co Ltd, these latest additions are the fifth and sixth vessels to join the consortium's 12-vessel fleet of LNG carriers, and the first two vessels to be managed by MISC's marine services arm, as part of the QatarEnergy LNG Expansion Programme.



An illustrative image of Mihzem and Idd al Shargi.

MISC president and group CEO Zahid Osman said, "The naming of *Mihzem* and *Idd Al Shargi* represents another step forward in our #deliveringProgress strategy. As the first vessels in this historic programme to be managed by our marine services team, we are committed to delivering safe, efficient, and sustainable maritime operations. Their successful completion also reflects the strength of our partnerships. We extend our sincere appreciation to our consortium partners NYK, K-Line and CLNG, whose collaboration has been crucial to achieving this milestone. Together, we remain steadfast in our support of QatarEnergy's ambitious vision and are privileged to contribute to their historic fleet expansion programme."

The vessels' names, *Mihzem* and *Idd Al Shargi*, draw inspiration from landmark locations in Qatar's energy heritage, symbolising continuity and progress from pioneering discoveries of the past to forward-looking partnerships that are shaping the global energy landscape.

In a statement yesterday, MISC said each vessel is equipped with advanced systems that ensure compliance with the International Maritime Organisation's stringent environmental standards, positioning them among the most efficient and sustainable LNG carriers in operation.

# Foreign investors extend net selling in Asian markets with US$1.7b outflow

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Foreign investors extended their net selling streak to two consecutive weeks across Asian markets last week, recording US$1.74 billion (RM7.33 billion) of net foreign outflows.

MBSB Investment Bank Bhd's (MBSB IB) Fund Flow Report for the week ended Oct 24, said that among the markets tracked, only Indonesia, Thailand, and India registered net foreign inflows while the rest saw net selling activities, led by Taiwan, which posted the largest regional outflow.

"Indonesia extended to a three-week consecutive net buying streak, registering the region's highest foreign purchases of US$254.7 million, as Bank Indonesia unexpectedly kept its policy rate unchanged after previously vowing to take an 'all-out pro-growth' stance, saying it would now assess the impact of previous easing and ongoing fiscal stimulus on Southeast Asia's largest economy.

Back home, MBSB IB said foreign investors extended their net selling streak for the third consecutive week, posting a modest net outflow of -RM14.6 million, significantly lower than the previous week's net outflow of -RM962.8 million.

Foreign investors were net sellers on two out of four trading days last week, with Wednesday seeing the highest net selling at -RM73.3 million, followed by Tuesday at -RM68.9 million, while Thursday and Friday saw net foreign buying activity, with RM97.5 million and RM30.1 million recorded, respectively.

"The top three sectors that recorded net foreign inflows were consumer products and services (RM195.7 million), industrial products and services (RM83 million), and technology (RM66.9 million).

"The top three sectors that recorded net foreign outflows were healthcare (-RM200.7 million), financial services (-RM142.7 million), and telecommunication and media (-RM52.4 million)," it said.

MBSB IB said local institutions extended a three-week consecutive streak of net purchases, recording inflows of RM111.1 million.

Local retailers extended their seventh consecutive week of net selling, posting a net outflow of -RM96.5 million, 3.7 times smaller than the previous week's outflow of -RM357.4 million. – Bernama

SINGER Since 1851

# Stocks surge on US-China trade breakthrough

## Japan and South Korea benchmark indices reach new highs

**HONG KONG:** Asian equities surged yesterday as investors cheered a breakthrough in US-China trade talks that set the stage for leaders Donald Trump and Xi Jinping to finalise a deal, averting an escalation in the world's biggest trade dispute.

Markets rallied after US Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said the threat of the US President imposing an additional 100% tariff on Chinese goods was "effectively off the table" following weekend negotiations in Malaysia.

"The tariffs will be averted," Bessent told ABC News on Sunday, adding that China agreed to delay rare earth export controls and make "substantial" soybean purchases.

Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng said the two sides reached a "preliminary consensus" on tariffs, export controls and fentanyl cooperation, describing the talks as "candid, in-depth and constructive".

The progress paves the way for Trump and Xi to meet on Thursday in South Korea on the sidelines of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit, their first face-to-face meeting since Trump returned to office.

Tokyo led gains in Asia, with the Nikkei 225 adding more than 2% and closing above the 50,000 mark for the first time, buoyed by Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's pro-stimulus stance and a weaker yen that benefits the export sector.

The breakthrough also comes ahead of Trump's visit to Tokyo, with Takaichi having pledged to raise defence spending to 2% of GDP this fiscal year – two years ahead of schedule.

"The Nikkei's breakout isn't a technical fluke – it's the pricing of a national renaissance," said Stephen Innes of SPI Asset Management.

Seoul, too, ended more than 2% higher, surpassing the 4,000 mark for the first time, with tech titan Samsung gaining more than 3% and chipmaker SK hynix jumping nearly 5%.



Pedestrians walk in front of a stock quotation board displaying the Nikkei share average outside a brokerage in Tokyo yesterday. – ***REUTERSPIC***

Hong Kong, Shanghai, Taipei, Singapore and Sydney also made gains, though Jakarta and Manila fell.

In Europe, London and Frankfurt opened with gains, while Paris dipped into the red.

The positive sentiment follows a strong finish on Wall Street last Friday, after benign US inflation data set the stage for another Federal Reserve interest rate cut.

Trump expressed confidence about reaching a comprehensive agreement with Beijing.

"They want to make a deal and we want to make a deal," he told reporters on Sunday in Kuala Lumpur.

"The assumption, of course, remains that that is just a negotiating gambit, with this week's talks leading to a restoration of the 'status quo' and a truce between the two nations," said Michael Brown of Pepperstone.

The Republican president is on a five-day Asia tour that includes stops in Malaysia, Japan and South Korea, with trade deals topping the agenda at every destination.

Futures for US copper surged on the trade deal optimism, bolstering the outlook for global demand.

The breakthrough came after months of escalating tensions, with Trump threatening the massive tariff hike in response to China's October expansion of rare earth export controls – a move Washington called "economic coercion".

Under the framework deal, China would defer its rare earth restrictions "for a year while they reexamine it", Bessent said. – AFP

# World's first yen-pegged stablecoin makes debut

**TOKYO:** The world's first stablecoin pegged to the yen launched in Japan yesterday, a small but significant move in a country where many consumers still prefer to use traditional payment means like cash and credit cards.

JPYC, a Japanese startup, began issuing the stablecoins – also called JPYC – which are fully convertible to the yen and backed by domestic savings and Japanese government bonds (JGBs).

The company aims to issue ¥10 trillion (RM277 billion) worth of JPYC over three years and have the digital assets used widely overseas.

It does not initially plan to charge transaction fees to encourage its usage, and instead aims to earn money from interest on holdings of JGBs.

"We hope to spur innovation by giving startups access to low transaction and settlement fees," CEO Noritaka Okabe told a press briefing.

"Increasing global interoperability would benefit us too, so we're open to capital tie-ups."

Blockchain-based stablecoins are typically pegged to a fiat currency and offer faster and cheaper transactions.

With strong backing from President Donald Trump, stablecoins pegged to the US dollar have surged and now account for over 99% of global stablecoin supply, according to the Bank for International Settlements.

Interest in stablecoins is also gaining momentum globally, and Japan's three megabanks will jointly issue stablecoins, the Nikkei daily reported this month.

Tomoyuki Shimoda, a former Bank of Japan executive who is currently an academic at Japan's Rikkyo University, said yen stablecoins are not going to have the same momentum as those backed by the US dollar – the world's reserve currency used across the globe.

"There's a lot of uncertainty on whether yen stablecoins will become widespread in Japan," he said.

"If megabanks join the market, the pace could accelerate. But it could still take at least two to three years."

Policymakers have expressed concern that stablecoins could facilitate the movement of funds outside regulated banking systems and potentially undermine the role of commercial banks in global payment flows.

"Stablecoins might emerge as a key player in the global payment system, partially replacing the role of bank deposits," BOJ Deputy Governor Ryozo Himino said in a speech last week, urging global regulators to adapt.

Elsewhere in Asia, South Korea has pledged to allow companies to introduce won-based stablecoins and China, too, is considering allowing usage of yuan-backed stablecoins. – Reuters

# Singapore to set aside more land for green energy, data centre park

**SINGAPORE:** Singapore will allocate more land on its manufacturing hub, Jurong Island, for renewable energy facilities and a data centre park, the Singapore Economic Development Board and developer JTC Corporation said in a joint statement yesterday.

About 300ha of land on the island's western side, roughly 10% of Jurong Island's total area, will be set aside for renewable power projects and low-carbon fuel production, the agencies said.

The 3,000ha Jurong Island is the centre of Singapore's energy and chemicals industry, housing two of the city-state's three refineries operated by Exxon Mobil, Chevron and PetroChina.

Jurong Island will be a global test-bed for new energies and low-carbon technologies, said Tan See Leng, Singapore's minister-in-charge of energy, science and technology, at the Singapore International Energy Week conference yesterday.

The development will scale up facilities for renewable energies, including solar sources, sustainable aviation fuel, low-or-zero carbon ammonia solutions for power generation and maritime bunkering, as well as battery storage, according to EDB and JTC.

These include Singapore's project for low-or-zero carbon ammonia power generation as well as hydrogen-ready power plants.

Separately, another 20ha of land will be set aside to develop Singapore's largest data centre park, designed to support up to 700 megawatts of power capacity.

Operators will be able to tap Jurong Island's existing ecosystem, including shared energy storage and utility infrastructure, ample power supply, and access to emerging low-carbon energy sources.

At the same time, Jurong Island will continue to diversify and drive growth opportunities in specialty chemicals and sustainable products, while battery storage infrastructure is also expanding on the island.

"There has been increasing interest from specialty chemicals players to grow their presence in Singapore, driven by growth in regional demand for higher-quality products," Tan said.

Sembcorp Industries said yesterday that it has piloted a battery stacking solution at its existing Jurong Island energy storage system facility.

The vertical expansion increases storage capacity without enlarging the physical footprint, boosting the energy storage system's capacity from 285 to 326 megawatt-hours. – Reuters

# China hails coming of 'multipolar world' ahead of Trump-Xi talks

**BEIJING:** China's foreign minister warned yesterday that a "multipolar world is coming", a veiled jab at Washington ahead of key talks between Donald Trump and Xi Jinping.

Global markets are watching closely to see if Thursday's planned meeting between the two presidents can halt a trade war sparked by the sweeping tariffs Trump announced after returning to office this year.

Speaking at a forum in Beijing yesterday, Wang Yi urged "an end to politicising economic and trade issues, artificially fragmenting global markets, and resorting to trade wars and tariff battles".

"Frequently withdrawing from agreements and reneging on commitments, while enthusiastically forming blocs and cliques, has subjected multilateralism to unprecedented challenges," Wang said, without naming specific countries.

"The tide of history cannot be reversed and a multipolar world is coming," Wang said.

Trump began a tour of Asia on Sunday, which is set to culminate in a meeting with Xi in South Korea – the first face-to-face talks between the two leaders since the US president began his second term in January. – AFP

# Japan considers US-style foreign investment panel

## New PM expresses frustration over low awareness of security risks

**TOKYO:** Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's new government is considering creating its own version of the US committee that vets acquisitions by foreigners for national security concerns.

The move to create a Japanese version of the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States (CFIUS) comes as Takaichi, a hardline conservative, looks to beef up such screenings.

The ruling coalition is aiming to pass necessary legislation for such a panel in next year's regular parliamentary session.

It is likely to be a panel that brings in members from ministries and agencies involved in investment screening to enhance their coordination, a source familiar with the thinking said.

During the ruling party's leadership race last month, Takaichi said she "keenly felt that among the ministries overseeing investment cases, some have a strong awareness of economic security and national defenxe, but others do not".

"That's why I believe we need to establish a Japanese version of CFIUS for security clearance."

In a related move, Takaichi instructed new Finance Minister Satsuki Katayama last week to examine how to further enhance the foreign investment screening framework under the Foreign Exchange and Foreign Trade Act (FEFTA).

"We are currently examining ways to improve the effectiveness and strengthen the screening framework. This is a very important and weighty issue," Katayama said in an interview with Reuters on Friday.

These steps coincide with a scheduled review of FEFTA, which underwent an overhaul in 2020 that lowered the threshold for prior review of share purchases to 1% from 10%.

A supplementary provision of the revised law calls for a review five years after its enforcement.

It is not clear how those potential changes could affect the strictness of review for foreign acquisitions.

To date, Japan has rejected only one deal under FEFTA – an attempted acquisition by the London-based Children's Investment Fund of Electric Power Development in 2008.

But there are a number of cases where plans have been withdrawn during reviews. In the last financial year through March, Japan received 1,638 prior notifications for stock purchases, excluding 363 withdrawals.

When Minebea Mitsumi launched a bid for Shibaura Electronics to counter an unsolicited buyout offer from Taiwan's Yageo, its CEO Yoshihisa Kainuma expressed concern that the criteria for screenings are unclear.

Yageo won the US$740 million deal after obtaining security clearance – Reuters




Employees work at a copper smelter in the China city of Yantai. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# China industrial profits surge amid overcapacity crackdown

**BEIJING:** China's industrial profits grew at their fastest pace in nearly two years in September, marking a second straight month of gains and signalling long-awaited measures designed to curb overcapacity and rebalance the economy may be gaining traction.

Top leaders in July vowed to take steps to tackle loss-making, inefficient firms, prompted by rising fears of entrenched deflation in the world's second-largest economy driven by brutal price wars and weak domestic demand.

Analysts said Beijing's policy shift, which occurred as US tariffs weighed on exports, amounted to reversing years of using cheap loans to prop up jobs and sustain provincial economies.

Giving policymakers cause for optimism, industrial profits rose at an annual rate of 21.6% in September – the fastest pace since November 2023 – following a 20.4% jump in August, data from the National Bureau of Statistics showed on Monday. Industrial profits grew 3.2% over the January-September period.

The figures cover firms with annual revenue of at least 20 million yuan (RM11.8 million) from their main operations.

"The overall supply-demand picture has become slightly more balanced, industrial capacity utilisation has improved and industrial enterprise profit margins have increased," said Xu Tianchen, senior economist at the Economist Intelligence Unit.

"The producer price index also rebounded slightly, a small positive step in the long journey to rebalancing the economy."

That said, China's US$19 trillion economy remains far from stable, weighed down by a prolonged property slump, a fragile job market and heavily indebted local governments.

Gross domestic product grew 4.8% in July-September, slowing from 5.2% in the second quarter, officials announced last week, keeping pressure on policymakers to roll out more stimulus to shore up momentum.

And while the growth rate kept China on track to reach its target of roughly 5% this year, the economy's dependence on external demand at a time of mounting trade tensions with Washington raises questions over whether that pace can be sustained, as does its reliance on large, state-owned firms.

Private-sector firms' profits rose 5.1% in the first nine months of the year, though analysts noted the figure was skewed by a handful of large companies, including Chinese electric vehicle battery giant CATL, whose net profit jumped 41.2% year-on-year.

State-owned firms posted a 0.3% decline in profits over the same period, the data showed.

Many are highly exposed to recent global commodity price spikes and cannot easily lay off staff to improve margins, economists said. – Reuters

# India bonds inch lower, tracking US Treasuries

**MUMBAI:** Indian government bonds inched lower in early deals yesterday, tracking a similar move in US Treasuries, with traders remaining indifferent to a dip in the weekly state debt supply.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year note was at 6.5439% as of 10.30am IST, after closing at 6.5345% on Friday. It rose 2 basis points last week.

Bond yields rise when prices fall.

The 10-year US Treasury yield rose for a third day to 4.0372% in Asian hours. It has risen over 8 basis points since last Wednesday.

Officials on Sunday hashed out the framework of a trade deal for US President Donald Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping to pause steeper American tariffs and China's curbs on rare earths exports, US officials said.

"Amid a lack of catalysts, the market will continue to track US treasuries, with focus on US-China trade deal," a trader at a private bank said.

Separately, a lower-than-planned supply in the weekly state debt sale failed to boost sentiment.

Indian states are set to raise 178 billion rupees (RM8.55 billion) through the sale of bonds on Tuesday, with the quantum sharply lower than the previously determined 309 billion rupees, according to the calendar.

The Reserve Bank of India will also conduct an overnight variable rate repo auction worth 1 trillion rupees to shore up liquidity.

India's banking system liquidity surplus stood at 310 billion rupees as of October 24 after falling to a deficit in the preceding sessions.

India's overnight index swap rates were steady-to-higher, tracking US Treasury yields.

The one-year OIS rate was flat at 5.46%, while the two-year OIS rate was up 2 bps at 5.42%.

The five-year swap rate was up 1.75 bps at 5.6675%. – Reuters

# S'pore competition watchdog seeks feedback on new merger guidelines

**SINGAPORE:** The competition watchdog here has sought public feedback on proposed changes to two key guidelines that would streamline merger reviews and overhaul settlement procedures for anti-competitive cases, according to a statement yesterday.

The proposed changes are aimed at giving businesses clearer guidance on competition rules in Singapore, while cutting review times and compliance costs.

The Competition and Consumer Commission of Singapore (CCS) said in the statement that it plans to amend its merger procedure guidelines to introduce a streamlined track for deals unlikely to raise competition concerns, aiming to shorten review times and ease compliance costs.

CCS said it also proposed a new settlement procedure guideline to replace its existing fast-track process for anti-competitive cases.

The changes include increasing the maximum settlement discount and clarifying the regulator's position if a party appeals after settling. – Reuters

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# Striking Boeing defence workers reject contract offer for fourth time

**NEW YORK:** More than 3,000 Boeing defence workers on strike in the US Midwest since August voted to reject the company's latest contract offer, their union said on Sunday – in the fourth such refusal.

"Boeing claimed they listened to their employees – the result of today's vote proves they have not," International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM) President Brian Bryant said in a statement.

No vote tally was given.

Workers in the St Louis area are waiting for bigger wage increases, a larger ratification bonus and retirement contributions on par with those earned by Boeing workers in the Pacific Northwest, the statement said.

Boeing said it was "disappointed" by the vote, which "failed by the slimmest of margins, 51% to 49%".

"With the close result and the increased interest we're hearing from teammates who want to cross the picket line, it's clear many understand the value of our offer," a Boeing spokesperson told AFP.

Dan Gillian, a top executive in the St Louis Boeing branch, said on Wednesday that the offer would provide an average salary increase of 45% over the contract's five-year term, plus various bonuses, increased vacation time, and added health and pension benefits.

The Boeing machinists – on strike since Aug 4 – work on the F-15 and F-18 combat aircraft, the T-7 Red Hawk Advanced Pilot Training System and the MQ-25 unmanned aircraft in factories in Missouri and Illinois.

In early September, Boeing began recruiting replacement workers.

Then earlier this month, it sought to identify more tasks that could be outsourced to third parties.

"We are turning our focus to executing the next phase of our contingency plan in support of our customers," Boeing said on Sunday. – AFP




Workers hold signs during a walkout by members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers over contract negotiations, outside Boeing company's facility, in Berkeley, Missouri. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# HSBC to take US$1.1b hit after Madoff case ruling

## Bank says eventual financial impact could be very different from estimate

**LONDON:** HSBC Holdings said yesterday it will book a US$1.1 billion provision in its third-quarter results after losing part of an appeal in a long-running lawsuit tied to Bernard Madoff's Ponzi scheme.

HSBC acted as a service provider to several funds that invested with Bernard L. Madoff Investment Securities LLC. Herald Fund SPC sued HSBC's Luxembourg unit in 2009 seeking restitution of assets it said were lost in the fraud.

Last Friday, the Luxembourg Court of Cassation rejected an appeal by HSBC's unit over the restitution of securities claimed by Herald, although it accepted its appeal on a separate cash restitution claim, the bank said.

HSBC now plans to lodge a second appeal with the Luxembourg Court of Appeal and if unsuccessful, the bank said it would contest the amount to be paid.

It added that the eventual financial impact could differ significantly from its current estimate.

Europe's largest bank by assets, which reports its third-quarter earnings on Tuesday, said in July that Herald, which is in liquidation, was seeking the restitution of securities and cash worth US$2.5 billion plus interest or damages of US$5.6 billion plus interest.

HSBC did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the separate securities and cash amounts that Herald is seeking. The principal liquidators of Herald also did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The bank estimated that the provision would have an impact of around 15 basis points on its common equity tier 1 (CET1) capital ratio.

That would come on top of a 125 basis points impact arising from its US$13.6 billion deal to take its majority-owned Hong Kong unit Hang Seng Bank private.

The charge could weigh on sentiment slightly but the impact should be limited as HSBC has already suspended dividend payments for the next three quarters due to the acquisition of Hang Seng Bank, said Lorraine Tan, director of equity research (Asia) for Morningstar.

The bank's Hong Kong-listed shares were flat in morning trade, trailing a 1% increase for the benchmark Hang Seng Index .

Madoff's fraud was estimated as high as US$64.8 billion.

It went undiscovered for many years until Madoff confessed to his sons in December 2008, one day after his firm's Christmas party. Madoff eventually pleaded guilty to 11 criminal counts.

He died at age 82 in April 2021 while serving a 150-year prison sentence.

HSBC in 2012 settled with Kalix Fund for an undisclosed amount, also over losses the fund had suffered during the collapse of Madoff's financial empire.

The fund had sued the bank for US$35.6 million. – Reuters

# Amazon to invest US$1.6 billion in Dutch operation

**AMSTERDAM:** Amazon plans to invest €1.4 billion (RM6.9 billion) in the Netherlands over the next three years, the company said yesterday.

The investment is its largest in the euro zone's fifth biggest economy since it launched its activities there in 2020, the company said.

Amazon has around 1,000 employees in the Netherlands, where its online sales trail those of market leader Bol.com, a subsidiary of retail firm Ahold Delhaize.

"The Netherlands is an important growth market for us," Amazon's head for Belgium and the Netherlands Eva Faict said.

"These investments will allow us to better serve our customers and improve our services."

In an interview with Dutch financial daily FD published yesterday, Faict said the investments were partly aimed at the development of artificial intelligence for entrepreneurs who sell their products on Amazon's platform.

Earlier this month, she announced a US$1.16 billion investment in Amazon's Belgian operations. – Reuters

# Novartis acquiring Avidity Biosciences for US$12 billion

**GENEVA:** Swiss pharmaceutical giant Novartis announced on Sunday it had agreed to buy Avidity Biosciences, valuing the US biopharmaceutical company at US$12 billion.

"The proposed acquisition is expected to create an industry-leading pipeline, building on the Novartis expertise in spinal muscular atrophy and commercialisation capabilities in genetic neuromuscular diseases," Novartis said in a statement.

The move will bring Avidity's late-stage neuroscience programmes into the Novartis fold and give it access to a "differentiated RNA-targeting delivery platform", it said.

The deal is expected to be closed in the first half of 2026, after San Diego-based Avidity's early-stage precision cardiology programmes has been separated off into a new company.

Avidity common stock holders will receive US$72 per share in cash when the deal closes – a 46% premium on Friday's closing share price, Novartis said.

The deal values the company "at approximately US$12 bn on a fully diluted basis and representing an enterprise value of approximately US$11 bn at the expected closing date", it added.

Until the deal is closed, each company will continue operating independently.

Avidity Biosciences develops Antibody Oligonucleotide Conjugates (AOCs) to treat serious diseases, with an initial focus on rare neuromuscular genetic disorders.

"Avidity's pioneering AOC platform for RNA therapeutics and its late-stage assets bolster our commitment to delivering innovative, targeted and potentially first-in-class medicines to treat devastating, progressive neuromuscular diseases," said Novartis chief executive Vas Narasimhan.

"The Avidity team has built robust programmes with industry-leading delivery of RNA therapeutics to muscle tissue.

"We look forward to developing these programmes to meaningfully change the trajectory of diseases for patients."

Novartis said the proposed acquisition would expand its scope to tackle genetically defined diseases with high unmet need.

Avidity's programmes aim to address root genetic causes, restore muscle function, and potentially slow the progression of the disease.

Switzerland is home to a number of pharmaceutical giants including Roche and Novartis.

Switzerland's pharmaceutical industry is the main driver of economic growth and alone generates seven to eight percent of the country's gross domestic product.

Pharmaceutical companies are facing massive pressure from US President Donald Trump's administration to move production to the United States.

Novartis, based in Basel in northern Switzerland, announced in April that it planned to invest US$23 billion in the United States over five years.

Roche likewise announced plans invest US$50 billion in the United States over the next five years, in a bid to head off the threat of tariffs. – AFP

# MARKET ROUND-UP: OCT 27

27-Oct-2025 Bursa Malaysia

Trade Statistics

| | Net (in RM million): | Participation |
|---|---|---|
| Retail | -1.25 | 18.95% |
| Institutions | 245.23 | 45.57% |
| Foreign | -243.98 | 35.48% |

Source: Bursa Malaysia, Berjaya Research
Preliminary statistics (excluding trade amendments). For final data, please refer to www.bursamalaysia.com.

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- Company coverage & trading insights
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***SUNBIZ*** presents a summary of the day's trading activity on Bursa Malaysia and other markets in an easy to digest format.

Sources: *Bursa Malaysia, Bernama, shareinvestor.com and websites*

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## Bursa Indices

| INDEX | | CHANGE |
|---|---|---|
| FBMEMAS | 12,109.00 | +38.00 |
| FBMKLCI | 1,618.38 | +5.11 |
| CONSUMER PRODUCTS | 534.90 | -3.90 |
| INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS | 172.25 | +0.34 |
| CONSTRUCTION | 314.55 | +0.84 |
| FINANCIAL SERVICES | 18,249.90 | +45.29 |
| ENERGY | 783.39 | -7.93 |
| TELECOMMUNICATIONS | 496.90 | +3.72 |
| HEALTH CARE | 1,689.91 | +19.15 |
| TRANSPORTATION | 1,020.22 | +4.05 |
| PROPERTY | 1,049.33 | +0.91 |
| PLANTATION | 8,016.42 | +107.13 |
| FBMSHA | 12,199.90 | +53.22 |
| FBMACE | 5,236.75 | -55.91 |
| TECHNOLOGY | 63.70 | +0.73 |

**TURNOVER: 3.441 bil** **VALUE: RM2.908 bil**

# FBM KLCI rises on optimism over potential US-China trade deal

**BURSA** Malaysia closed higher yesterday, tracking regional gains, as investor sentiment was lifted by optimism over a potential United States-China trade deal and positive vibes from the ongoing Asean meeting, which boosted confidence in regional economic cooperation.

The FBM KLCI gained 5.11 points, or 0.32%, to 1,618.38 from Friday's close of 1,613.27.

Market breadth was mixed with 543 gainers matching 543 losers, while 540 counters were unchanged, 1,099 untraded, and 12 suspended.

Turnover expanded to 3.44 billion units worth RM2.91 billion compared with 2.98 billion units worth RM2.43 billion last Friday.

Regionally, Hong Kong's Hang Seng Index rose 1.05% to 26,433.70, South Korea's Kospi Index soared 2.57% to 4,042.83, and Japan's Nikkei 225 Index surged 2.46% to 50,512.32. Singapore's Straits Times Index increased 0.41% to 4,440.30 and China's SSE Composite Index gained 1.18% to 3,996.94.

Meanwhile, Rakuten Trade Sdn Bhd vice-president of equity research Thong Pak Leng said regional sentiment continued to improve with equities moving higher, driven by growing investor confidence in a potential US rate cut and encouraging signs from the US-China trade discussions.

"On the domestic front, sentiment has also turned more positive amid improving geopolitical and economic developments, providing investors with some relief after weeks of uncertainty," he told Bernama.

Among heavyweights, Maybank added one sen to RM9.91, CIMB Group rose eight sen to RM7.45, Tenaga Nasional gained 14 sen to RM13.36, and IHH Healthcare increased two sen to RM8.35, while Public Bank was unchanged at RM4.22.

## Top 20 Actives

| STOCKS | CLOSING (RM) | +/-(RM) | +/-(%) | VOLUME ('00) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| HSI-CWKT | 0.120 | +0.010 | +9.09 | 2,104,181 |
| IAB | 0.655 | +0.295 | +81.94 | 1,978,877 |
| HSI-CWI8 | 0.150 | +0.010 | +7.14 | 1,225,073 |
| HSI-PWJY | 0.125 | -0.040 | -24.24 | 1,130,456 |
| TWL | 0.025 | - | - | 1,108,799 |
| HSI-CWI2 | 0.080 | +0.005 | +6.67 | 952,430 |
| HSI-PWLQ | 0.095 | -0.020 | -17.39 | 711,025 |
| TANCO | 0.890 | +0.005 | +0.57 | 577,449 |
| PTRANS | 0.335 | - | - | 573,025 |
| L&G | 0.155 | -0.010 | -6.06 | 544,400 |
| ECOSHOP | 1.440 | -0.110 | -7.10 | 466,774 |
| TOPGLOV | 0.685 | +0.010 | +1.48 | 434,208 |
| ZETRIX | 0.850 | +0.010 | +1.19 | 369,021 |
| PHARMA | 0.255 | - | - | 288,145 |
| SDG | 5.400 | +0.150 | +2.86 | 282,644 |
| HSI-PWJ8 | 0.060 | -0.020 | -25.00 | 275,269 |
| INARI | 2.610 | +0.100 | +3.98 | 250,576 |
| MEGAFB | 0.790 | +0.015 | +1.94 | 231,481 |
| VS | 0.525 | -0.005 | -0.94 | 226,494 |
| HSI-CWI0 | 0.045 | -0.015 | -25.00 | 202,754 |




## World Stocks/Commodities

| INDEX | CLOSING | DAILY CHANGE | DAILY CHANGE (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| DJIA (US) | 47,207.12 | +472.51 | +1.01 |
| S&P 500 (US) | 6,791.69 | +53.25 | +0.79 |
| NASDAQ (US) | 23,204.87 | +263.07 | +1.15 |
| NYSE (US) | 21,698.06 | +74.24 | +0.34 |
| EURO STOXX 50 (EUR) | 5,692.28 | +17.78 | +0.31 |
| FTSE 100 (UK) | 9,641.12 | -4.50 | -0.05 |
| DAX (GER) | 24,266.68 | +26.79 | +0.11 |
| NIKKEI 225 (JPN) | 50,512.32 | +1,212.67 | +2.46 |
| TOPIX INDEX (JPN) | 3,325.05 | +55.60 | +1.70 |
| HANG SENG INDEX (HK) | 26,433.70 | +273.55 | +1.05 |
| CSI 300 (CHN) | 4,716.02 | +55.34 | +1.19 |
| SHANGHAI SE COM (CHN) | 3,996.95 | +46.63 | +1.18 |
| KOSPI INDEX (SK) | 4,042.83 | +101.24 | +2.57 |
| SENSEX INDEX (IND) | 84,776.15 | +564.27 | +0.67 |
| ASX 200 (AUS) | 9,055.64 | +36.69 | +0.41 |
| ALL ORDINARIES INDX (AUS) | 9,351.90 | +34.72 | +0.37 |
| FBM KLCI | 1,618.38 | +5.11 | +0.32 |
| STRAITS TIMES INDEX (S'PORE) | 4,440.30 | +18.09 | +0.41 |
| MSCI ASIA PACIFIC | 226.11 | +1.09 | +0.48 |
| WTI (US$/BBL.) | 60.85 | -0.65 | -1.06 |
| BRENT (US$/BBL.) | 65.29 | -0.65 | -0.99 |
| GOLD (COMEX) (US$/T OZ) | 4,055.00 | -82.80 | -2.00 |
| SILVER (COMEX) (US$/T OZ) | 47.64 | -0.95 | -1.93 |
| PLATINUM (US$/T OZ) | 1,590.4700 | -19.20 | -1.19 |
| COPPER (COMEX) (US CENTS/LB.) | 517.45 | +5.20 | +1.02 |
| COPPER 3MO (LME) (US$/MT) | 10,962.50 | +108.00 | +0.99 |
| CORN (US CENTS/BU.) | 428.50 | +5.25 | +1.24 |
| WHEAT (US CENTS/BU.) | 523.00 | +10.50 | +2.05 |
| SOYBEAN OIL (CBOT) (US CENTS/LB.) | 50.61 | +0.34 | +0.68 |
| COCOA (ICE) (US$/MT) | 6,219.00 | -100.00 | -1.58 |
| RUBBER (S'PORE) (US CENTS/KG) | 173.30 | +0.20 | +0.12 |

*As at 6pm, Oct 27.*

## Top 20 Gainers (By RM)

| STOCKS | CLOSING (RM) | +/- (RM) | VOLUME ('00) |
|---|---|---|---|
| UMSINT | 5.800 | +1.080 | 3,309 |
| MPI | 30.540 | +0.560 | 6,469 |
| UTDPLT | 24.500 | +0.500 | 6,999 |
| F&N | 28.540 | +0.380 | 613 |
| KLK | 20.900 | +0.380 | 5,948 |
| CHINTEK | 10.960 | +0.300 | 277 |
| PPB | 11.500 | +0.300 | 15,626 |
| IAB | 0.655 | +0.295 | 1,978,877 |
| BAT | 5.700 | +0.190 | 8,714 |
| ALLIANZ | 18.040 | +0.160 | 3,705 |
| NIKKEI-CR | 1.100 | +0.160 | 10 |
| SDG | 5.400 | +0.150 | 282,644 |
| TENAGA | 13.360 | +0.140 | 52,586 |
| HSI-CWIU | 0.660 | +0.135 | 35 |
| BURSA-C1F | 0.130 | +0.120 | 1 |
| ALLIANZ-PA | 18.100 | +0.100 | 47 |
| HLIND | 13.820 | +0.100 | 423 |
| INARI | 2.610 | +0.100 | 250,576 |
| VSTECS | 4.000 | +0.100 | 4,833 |
| NIKKEI-CT | 0.805 | +0.095 | 390 |

## Top 20 Losers (By RM)

| STOCKS | CLOSING (RM) | +/- (RM) | VOLUME ('00) |
|---|---|---|---|
| NESTLE | 106.600 | -1.400 | 382 |
| HEIM | 21.700 | -0.440 | 3,594 |
| CARLSBG | 16.540 | -0.240 | 962 |
| DLADY | 26.100 | -0.200 | 122 |
| HSTECH-C38 | 0.140 | -0.190 | 150 |
| ECOSHOP-CI | 0.250 | -0.160 | 10,333 |
| HI | 2.380 | -0.140 | 50,443 |
| PETGAS | 18.600 | -0.140 | 1,763 |
| ECOSHOP | 1.440 | -0.110 | 466,774 |
| KLCC | 8.690 | -0.110 | 39,939 |
| MBSB-C88 | 0.040 | -0.110 | 1,001 |
| MSC-CV | 0.045 | -0.105 | 501 |
| BKAWAN | 19.100 | -0.100 | 410 |
| FBMKLCI-HEG | 0.075 | -0.100 | 120 |
| GENTINGC4D | 0.050 | -0.100 | 2,962 |
| HIBISCS-C84 | 0.050 | -0.100 | 400 |
| KLUANG | 5.200 | -0.100 | 112 |
| LPI | 14.340 | -0.100 | 438 |
| MBSB-C89 | 0.050 | -0.100 | 3,400 |
| SBAGAN | 5.600 | -0.100 | 382 |

## Top 20 Gainers (By %)

| STOCKS | CLOSING (RM) | +/- (%) | VOLUME ('00) |
|---|---|---|---|
| BURSA-C1F | 0.130 | +1200.00 | 1 |
| MCOM | 0.050 | +150.00 | 5,450 |
| GCB-C25 | 0.010 | +100.00 | 3,000 |
| IAB | 0.655 | +81.94 | 1,978,877 |
| CIMB-C1Y | 0.050 | +66.67 | 750 |
| LYC | 0.025 | +66.67 | 235 |
| EVD-WB | 0.040 | +60.00 | 464 |
| NEXG-C70 | 0.080 | +60.00 | 25,780 |
| GREATEC-C15 | 0.030 | +50.00 | 9,463 |
| HARTA-C2X | 0.015 | +50.00 | 1,201 |
| MTRONIC | 0.015 | +50.00 | 4,782 |
| SUPERMX-C5B | 0.015 | +50.00 | 3 |
| INARI-C3J | 0.110 | +46.67 | 350 |
| BAT-C40 | 0.065 | +44.44 | 13,919 |
| HSI-CWMN | 0.215 | +43.33 | 100 |
| AMD-C1 | 0.155 | +40.91 | 54 |
| ALIBABA-C49 | 0.210 | +40.00 | 20,230 |
| CMSB-C63 | 0.130 | +36.84 | 14,868 |
| KOSSAN-C82 | 0.020 | +33.33 | 36,486 |
| NATGATE-CT | 0.020 | +33.33 | 301 |

## Top 20 Losers (By %)

| STOCKS | CLOSING (RM) | +/- (%) | VOLUME ('00) |
|---|---|---|---|
| MBSB-C88 | 0.040 | -73.33 | 1,001 |
| MSC-CV | 0.045 | -70.00 | 501 |
| GENTINGC4D | 0.050 | -66.67 | 2,962 |
| HIBISCS-C84 | 0.050 | -66.67 | 400 |
| MBSB-C89 | 0.050 | -66.67 | 3,400 |
| ECOSHOP-CH | 0.020 | -60.00 | 43,264 |
| MAHSING-C84 | 0.010 | -60.00 | 30,000 |
| SCGBHD-CO | 0.060 | -60.00 | 1,520 |
| SNTORIA | 0.010 | -60.00 | 132,307 |
| HSTECH-C38 | 0.140 | -57.58 | 150 |
| FBMKLCI-HEG | 0.075 | -57.14 | 120 |
| HSI-PWJU | 0.060 | -55.56 | 7,950 |
| SUPERMX-C5A | 0.025 | -54.55 | 500 |
| BCMALL | 0.005 | -50.00 | 10,302 |
| TECHBASE-WB | 0.005 | -50.00 | 2,063 |
| YTLPOWR-C77 | 0.005 | -50.00 | 6,361 |
| NIKKEI-HQ | 0.020 | -42.86 | 7,000 |
| ECOSHOP-CP | 0.135 | -40.00 | 350 |
| ECOSHOP-CR | 0.060 | -40.00 | 119,005 |
| ECOSHOP-CB | 0.085 | -39.29 | 31,212 |

# MARKETS/FROM THE BROKERS

***SUNBIZ*** presents extracts of a selection of commentaries and research reports received from stockbrokers on counters that could be of interest to investors.

Compiled by **SunBiz Team**

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## Analysts positive on IJM Corp after big data centre project win

**IJM** Corp Bhd is on track to meet its RM6 billion-RM8 billion guidance for financial year 2026 (FY2026) after bagging the RM1.26 billion large hyperscale data centre (DC) project in Selangor, said CGS International.

Construction is scheduled to commence in the fourth quarter of 2025 (4Q 2025) and is expected to be completed in 2Q 2027.

In a note, the research house said the project was IJM's second DC win over the past three months and fifth DC win thus far, bringing its year-to-date (YTD) FY2026 forecast wins to RM4.2 billion and local orderbook to RM8.5 billion as at Oct 25, 2025.

"Having a tier-1 hyperscaler as a new DC end client is a major milestone for IJM; it will be a much-needed share price catalyst for the company.

"We reiterate our 'add' rating with a target price of RM3.61. We like IJM for its strong construction franchise and its synergistic spun concrete piles business," it said.

Echoing the sentiment, RHB Investment Bank Bhd said IJM is now ready to take on more DC jobs, as it continues to work towards completing earlier ones.

It noted that the company has submitted about four to six bids for DC jobs across the Klang Valley and Johor in 2025.

"Telekom Malaysia's DC in Iskandar Puteri, Johor (which IJM is constructing) had a topping-out ceremony in July – indicating that its progress has reached the point of meaningful completion.

"We make no changes to our earnings estimates as the latest job win is within our FY2026 job target assumption of RM6 billion," it said.

## Malaysia-US trade deals send ringgit higher against greenback

**THE** ringgit closed higher against the US dollar and other major currencies yesterday, as positive sentiment after trade agreements signed between Malaysia and the United States during the 47th Asean Summit lifted the local currency.

At 6 pm, the ringgit appreciated to 4.2085/2135 against the US dollar from 4.2210/2255 at Friday's close.

Bank Muamalat Malaysia Bhd chief economist Dr Mohd Afzanizam Abdul Rashid noted that the local note was on "firmer footing" as it rose 0.27% against the greenback.

Apart from that, he said the latest US Consumer Price Index reading, which came in lower than expected in September, suggested that the US Federal Reserve is on track to deliver a 25-basis-point interest rate cut when it meets from Oct 28-29.

"This would narrow the gap between the Fed funds rate and the overnight policy rate, which could be positive for the ringgit," he told Bernama.

At the close, the ringgit also traded higher against major currencies.

It climbed against the Japanese yen to 2.7550/7582 from 2.7592/7623 at Friday's close, gained against the British pound to 5.6158/6225 from 5.6232/6292, and was higher versus the euro at 4.8974/9032 from 4.9010/9062.

The local note traded stronger against Asean currencies.

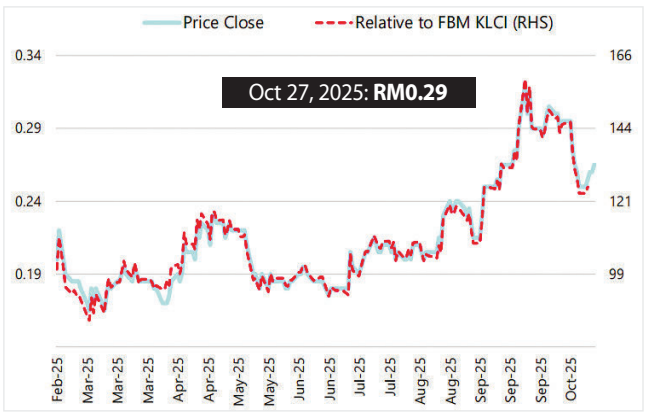
It inched up against the Singapore dollar to 3.2460/2502 from 3.2484/2521 at Friday's close, gained versus the Thai baht to 12.8633/8837 from 12.8768/8952, and edged up vis-a-vis the Indonesian rupiah to 253.1/253.6 from 254.2/254.6. The ringgit strengthened versus the Philippine peso to 7.14/7.16 from 7.20/7.21 previously.

## Exchange Rates

| FOREIGN CURRENCY | SELLING TT/OD | BUYING TT | BUYING OD |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 US Dollar | 4.2900 | 4.1450 | 4.1350 |
| 1 Australian Dollar | 2.8130 | 2.7000 | 2.6840 |
| 1 Brunei Dollar | 3.3030 | 3.2010 | 3.1930 |
| 1 Canadian Dollar | 3.0620 | 2.9770 | 2.9650 |
| 1 Euro | 4.9900 | 4.8300 | 4.8100 |
| 1 New Zealand Dollar | 2.4780 | 2.3870 | 2.3710 |
| 1 Singapore Dollar | 3.3030 | 3.2010 | 3.1930 |
| 1 Sterling Pound | 5.7150 | 5.5350 | 5.5150 |
| 1 Swiss Franc | 5.4230 | 5.1930 | 5.1780 |
| 100 UAE Dirham | 117.9400 | 111.8300 | 111.6300 |
| 100 Bangladesh Taka | 3.5730 | 3.3280 | 3.1280 |
| 100 Chinese Renminbi | 60.6100 | 58.0600 | 58.0600 |
| 100 Danish Krone | 68.4900 | 63.0400 | 62.8400 |
| 100 Hongkong Dollar | 55.6900 | 52.9300 | 52.7300 |
| 100 Indian Rupee | 4.9600 | 4.6500 | 4.4500 |
| 100 Indonesian Rupiah | 0.0267 | 0.0242 | 0.0192 |
| 100 Japanese Yen | 2.8120 | 2.7110 | 2.7010 |
| 100 New Taiwan Dollar | 15.0000 | N/A | N/A |
| 100 Norwegian Krone | 43.9700 | 40.4600 | 40.2600 |
| 100 Pakistan Rupee | 1.5400 | 1.4400 | 1.2400 |
| 100 Philippine Peso | 7.4200 | 6.9800 | 6.7800 |
| 100 Qatar Riyal | 118.7700 | 112.7500 | 112.5500 |
| 100 Saudi Riyal | 115.4200 | 109.5700 | 109.3700 |
| 100 South Africa Rand | 25.8200 | 23.3100 | 23.1100 |
| 100 Sri Lanka Rupee | 1.4500 | 1.3300 | 1.1300 |
| 100 Swedish Krona | 47.1100 | 42.9100 | 42.7100 |
| 100 Thai Baht | 13.7100 | 12.1500 | 11.7500 |

***Source: Malayan Banking Bhd/Bernama***

## TechStore Bhd
Not rated




*Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research*

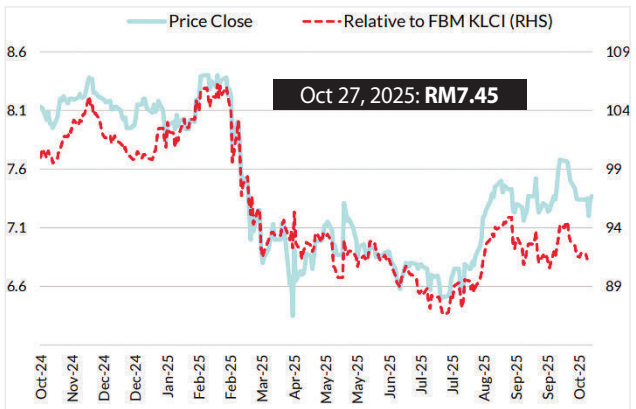
**BUDGET** 2026's RM12bn allocation for new rail lines, upgrades, and government technology (GovTech) digital initiatives bodes well for TechStore's growth prospects. Its tenderbook has surged to RM1.67bn, reflecting strong traction in rail and public sector opportunities. The group's strategic push to lift recurring income beyond the current 30% enhances its long-term earnings resilience, too. Trading at just 11x FY26F and 9x FY27F P/E, TechStore remains one of the most undervalued system integrators among its peers.

TechStore's orderbook expanded to RM119m as at 30 Jun from RM109.1m as at 31 Mar, supported by robust post-listing replenishment of orders worth roughly RM60m in 7M25. Of this, RM55m is slated for recognition in 2H25, followed by RM32m in FY26, RM13m in FY27, RM12m in FY28, and RM5m in FY29 - providing multi-year revenue visibility. Assuming a similar replenishment momentum into FY26, the group is on track to deliver record-high revenue.

Meanwhile, better margins in 1H25 mark a reversal from previous declines, reflecting growing customer satisfaction and demand for its niche expertise. TechStore's proven track record in Malaysia's major rail infrastructure projects positions it well to secure recurring brownfield works from its past project portfolios - evidenced by its recent RM7.7m job win for the Rapid Transit System (RTS)-related project, which it previously participated in.

We derive a FV of RM0.40-0.52 after assigning 16-21x P/E to TechStore's FY26F earnings, in line with the valuation we typically ascribe to system integrators. – ***RHB Research, Oct 27***

## CIMB Bhd
Buy. Target price: RM8.40




*Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research*

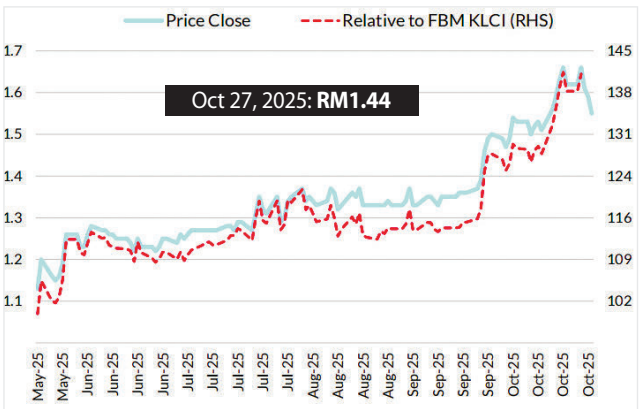
**CIMB** held its pre-closed period meeting on 24 October. We think it may record decent QoQ PATMI growth in 3Q25 on the back of stronger non-II, a lower tax rate and, possibly, non-loan ECL writebacks. YoY, however, a high non-II base in 3Q24 plus NII pressure in 3Q25 from lower policy and benchmark rates could pose hurdles. Looking ahead, loan and IB pipelines are strong, and management is turning more confident around the sustainability of Indonesia's improved liquidity situation - positives for the group's operating income outlook.

CIMB has seen its loan pipeline improved, given slightly better clarity on US tariffs, but drawdowns have lagged, thereby impacting loan growth. Nevertheless, this is just a matter of timing as to whether growth picks up in 4Q25 or spills over into 2026. On the other hand, the consumer book saw improved growth momentum in both Malaysia (mortgages) and Singapore (wealth management-related financing). As for the commercial and SME segments, loan growth has been largely stable.

NIM headwinds in Singapore persisted through 3Q25 due to another quarter of Singapore Overnight Rate Average (SORA) decline. There could be some further NIM pressure in 4Q, cushioned by efforts to ease off on campaign rates. As for Malaysia, the 10-20bps and 5-10bps cut for campaign and board deposit rates earlier in May, followed by a full pass-through of the Overnight Policy Rate cut are expected to help mitigate the impact of the lower policy rate. On Indonesia, CIMB was fairly optimistic that the improvement in liquidity situation is sustainable and would be positively felt by the group ahead.

Keep BUY and RM8.40 TP. – ***RHB Research, Oct 27***

## Eco-Shop Marketing Bhd
Neutral. Target price: RM1.63




*Source: Bloomberg, RHB Research*

**ECO-SHOP** Marketing's 1QFY26 earnings met expectations with robust GPM and strict opex control more than negated the post-price increase SSSG dip. While we foresee the burgeoning dollar store industry to provide a long expansion runway for Eco-Shop to offer robust and sustainable earnings growth, valuation looks fair at this juncture. We believe a strong sign of SSSG recovery will be key for the sentiment on the stock to turn bullish.

Eco-Shop's 1QFY26 results were broadly within expectations. Core net profit of RM59m (+40% YoY) accounted for 23% of both our and consensus' full-year forecasts - largely in line with the seasonal patterns. Post results, our FY26-28F earnings are materially unchanged after we refresh our SSSG, GPM and opex assumptions. Our DCF-derived TP stays unchanged at RM1.63 (inclusive of a 4% ESG premium), which implies 33x P/E FY26F or at discount to the large-cap comparable peers.

Results review. YoY, 1QFY26 revenue rose 3% to RM684m - the net addition of 85 outlets (+28%) mitigated the SSSG weakness (-12.7%) after demand reacted negatively to the mid-April price increase. That said, the price increase expanded 1QFY26 GPM by 6.4ppt, which more than offset the opex inflation (+3.1ppt/revenue) arising mainly from the higher minimum wage effective Feb 2025. Correspondingly, 1QFY26 core net profit surged 40% to RM59m. QoQ, 1QFY26 revenue was marginally lower by 1% due to the aforementioned demand softness. Despite the full impact of price increase, 1QFY26 GPM was flattish QoQ as Eco-Shop went aggressive with promotional activities to entice footfall. Meanwhile, opex/sales shrank 1.9ppt QoQ thanks to an efficiency gain from enhanced productivity.

Maintain NEUTRAL and RM1.63 TP. – ***RHB Research, Oct 27***

SCAN ME

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

**Advertising**
T: 03-7784 8888
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# School effort

***Students, teachers in anti-bullying short film*** **– P22**

## WEEKLY FOCUS

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Technology and social media

**TUESDAY**
Family and parenting

**WEDNESDAY**
Fashion and beauty

**THURSDAY**
Home and living

**FRIDAY**
Travel and leisure

**SATURDAY**
Food and beverage

– *123RFPIC*

**INSIDE**

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# Ending bullying in schools

## Teachers, students produce short film *AI Education Robot* to raise awareness, encourage empathy for victims

**THIS** is the main message of the short film *AI Education Robot*, written, directed and acted entirely by the teachers and students of SJK (C) Yen Min in Perak: "Stop bullying. Artificial intelligence (AI) cannot replicate human life. When facing bullying, we should not remain silent like a robot."

Through this creative work, they hope to convey an anti-bullying message to society and raise awareness of bullying in schools.

*AI Education Robot* is an original short film collaboratively produced by the teachers and students of a small primary school. The entire production was filmed solely using an iPhone.

The cast includes Year 2 and Year 3 students, all the teachers of the school and even the headmistress – who took on an acting role for the first time to show full support for the project.

Editing and post-production were also fully done by teachers, highlighting the belief that "education is not just about teaching, but also about sparking creativity and humanity".

This film integrates elements of education and technology, featuring an AI robot as the main character to explore human values, empathy and respect. It is not merely an entertaining school film but also a heartfelt and awareness-raising educational journey against bullying.

The film is directed by teacher Chu Chong Sing, an educator passionate about filmmaking. He has long used video as a medium to communicate educational values through thought-provoking stories. His previous works include:

- *The Magic Research Team* (2007) – An educational film about the process of product creation.
- *Angels and Demons* (2009) – Portraying different perspectives of parents, teachers and students toward education.
- *Dreams Come True (2013)* – Encouraging students to chase their dreams and revealing the true keys to success.

All of his works are based on school themes infused with educational and entertaining values.

*AI Education Robot* marks his latest creation, combining AI elements to offer a futuristic yet morally grounded viewing experience.

It is understood that Chu himself was once a victim of bullying during his school days. That painful experience inspired him to produce this film – as a voice for bullying victims and a reminder for society not to take the issue lightly, so schools can once again be safe and caring environments.

**About *AI Education Robot***

The story is set in the year 2030 when the Education Ministry introduces AI robots in schools to assist in teaching and student guidance. However, unexpectedly, this becomes the beginning of a bullying incident.

- An original creation by a small school (SKM – *Sekolah Kurang Murid*)

Produced by a school with only 44 students. From concept, script, filming to editing – all were done entirely by the school community, proving that "a small school can have big dreams".



The short film features acting by teachers and students of the school.

- Entirely filmed using a mobile phone

Without famous actors or professional equipment, the entire film was shot using a mobile phone. The spirit of "nothing is impossible for those who strive" truly shines through this project.

- Led by Year 2 students

The main characters are played by three Year 2 students, who deliver natural and moving performances.

- All teachers involved

Despite their busy teaching schedules, teachers dedicated their afternoons, weekends and holidays to participate in filming, demonstrating strong teamwork and unity.

- Headmistress also acts

Headmistress Tan Phik Hui plays the role of a newsreader. Despite the challenge of memorising lines and acting in front of the camera, she took on the role enthusiastically to support her teachers and students.

- Lead actor is a Malay student

The AI robot character is played by a Malay student, showcasing the spirit of unity and racial harmony within the school.

- Editing and production by teachers

From shooting to post-production, everything was handled by teachers skilled in multimedia, creatively merging education and technology.

- Integration of technology and innovation

The storyline highlights themes of AI and the future of education, depicting a fascinating experience when an "education robot" enters a school.

- Addressing the issue of school bullying

The film portrays real conflicts among students and their deep emotional impact, urging society to be more aware and empathetic toward victims of bullying.

- Premiere screening received overwhelming response

The film premiered at the school and received positive feedback from students, parents, the PTA and the school board, who all hope that similar creative works will continue.


The film being shot using a mobile phone.


The student actors demonstrate their talent in expressing emotion on camera.

# Mothers gather to celebrate strength at Ibu Legends Summit


(From left) Thanuja, Nicol and Lim in a fireside chat: 'Lessons from My Mother'.

**MORE** than 250 mothers were recently brought together for Nicol David Organisation's (NDO) first Ibu Legends Summit, a gathering celebrating and uplifting mothers from all walks of life.

"The summit is designed to give mothers the space, voice and recognition they truly deserve. Mothers are the heart of every home, they make everything happen for us. By connecting and celebrating every mother who is a leader, a legend and a light in her community, we are honouring their irreplaceable role in shaping families – the building blocks for the future of society," said NDO CEO and co-founder Mariana de Reyes.

The summit is an extension of NDO's Ibu Legends programme, which provides holistic support to mothers from lower-income communities through mental health workshops, financial literacy training, physical activity, peer support and access to free health checks. Since its launch, the Ibu Legends programme has helped women regain confidence, rebuild connections and strengthen family relationships in a positive environment.

Together with Little Legends for children, Ibu Legends has created real ripple effects within families – with 81% of mothers reporting they now exercise with their children, and many sharing that they feel more emotionally resilient, socially connected and hopeful about the future.

"When you are raised in a positive environment, like the one my mum and dad created for me, you naturally want to recreate that for others. We wanted to build a similar space within the foundation where mothers and their children could find that positive push. A place where our kids can truly feel they have no barriers and that they can achieve anything their heart desires. That is the incredible gift my parents gave me and we want to foster through NDO," Datuk Nicol David said.

The event featured a lineup of speakers, including Yayasan Hasanah managing director Siti Kamariah Ahmad Subki, Nicol, medical professional and entrepreneur Dr Jezamine Lim, and actress, human rights advocate and former Miss World Malaysia Thanuja Ananthan.

The summit also featured two workshops and a special art exhibition, which showcased 43 pieces by mothers reflecting the motherhood theme.




Mattel and Hasbro will make toys, collectibles, games and role-play products based on *KPop Demon Hunters*. **– PIC FROM REUTERS**

# Fans face wait for *KPop Demon Hunters* toys

## Products unlikely to ship until new year

**FANS** of Netflix's runaway hit *KPop Demon Hunters* will only be able to get their hands on branded toys well after the key holiday shopping season, a missed opportunity for Mattel and Hasbro that have won licensing deals from the streaming giant.

Netflix recently said Mattel and Hasbro will make toys, collectibles, games and role-play products based on the film that can be pre-ordered in the coming weeks, but most of those will not ship before January.

The toymakers had the chance to meet the year's biggest toy-buying period, a person familiar with the matter said. However, they did not foresee the crossover appeal with Korean pop music and anime fans as well as casual viewers, so they declined to commit to a licensing deal before the film was released in June, the person said.

Since it typically takes major toymakers 12 to 18 months to win licences, develop, manufacture and ship products to the US, they collaborate with movie studios on scheduling product releases, planning to stock shelves with what they bet will be popular toys before the year-end holidays, when toymakers make nearly a third of annual sales, industry experts said.

Mattel and Hasbro declined to comment on whether they declined the licences before the film was released.

In a recent interview, Mattel CEO Ynon Kreiz said: "It does take time to develop product, especially at the quality that we do."

"Here, we're going to put (the toys) on a fast track given the strong demand," Kreiz said.

**Merchandise licensing opens up new Netflix revenue stream**

*KPop Demon Hunters* tasted success at release. It topped streaming and became Netflix's most-watched animated film ever by early July, while *Golden*, a song from the film hit number one on Billboard Hot 100. Two months later, a theatrical sing-along release sold out at more than 1,300 theatres including in the US and UK.

To be sure, merchandise tied to movie hits or seen on celebrities can sell out no matter the time of launch. For instance, Labubus, the collectible plushie toys with a sharp-toothed grin, were first launched in 2015 but went viral a decade later after stars including Blackpink singer Lisa were seen carrying one.

But holiday sales this year are widely seen as even more important for a toy industry that has for years faced competition from mobile game makers and streaming firms, as US tariffs on imports have boosted costs.

For Netflix, merchandise licensing opens up a new revenue stream as its subscriber base matures – one that has brought enormous success to the likes of Walt Disney and Warner Bros Discovery with movies such as *Frozen* and *Barbie*.

Netflix in January landed its first master licensing deal with Squishmallows-maker Jazwares to make toys and costumes for a collection tied to TV show *Stranger Things*. The company has since partnered with Lego to make building sets inspired by anime series *One Piece*.

**This season's candidates for most popular toys**

Some US toymakers expect shortages of toys this season considering many supplies come from China, whose goods the US subjects to steep tariffs. They have also said major retailers have cut back on holiday orders because of rising costs and uncertainty about consumer spending. However, Adobe Analytics forecasts US consumers will spend about US$8.8 billion (RM37.1 billion) on toys this holiday season, up from US$8.2 billion last year.

Toys linked to *Jurassic World: Rebirth*, which was released in July, and *Transformers 8: Rise of Unicron*, set for release in late December, are likely to be the most popular merchandise this year, said trade group Toy Association CEO Greg Ahearn.

Funko, which makes four-inch collector's items called Funko Pops, announced a deal with Netflix in August to make US$14.99 figurines inspired by *KPop Demon Hunters* characters. But these too will only ship by Jan 30, the company's website showed.

Funko did not immediately return a request for comment.

Mattel is manufacturing a pack of three dolls from the movie, while Hasbro is developing a branded Monopoly card game that will be available to ship on Jan 1.

Hasbro's president of toys, games, licensing and entertainment Tim Kilpin said this month: "We have a long relationship with Disney on Marvel and *Star Wars*, and so we know what the cadence of entertainment events is, and we plan accordingly to create products around those entertainment events.

"But there are also times when a new property starts to break out. Those don't happen very often but when they do, it's exciting, it's a surprise." – Reuters

# Mobile app aims to empower autistic children through play

**AUSTRALIA'S** Autism Games has launched its debut mobile app Whizkid Games, created especially for autistic children.

The app transforms everyday screen time into learning experiences through interactive stories and playful games that families can enjoy together. Grounded in research and guided by scientific design, Whizkid Games helps children build practical and transferable skills that nurture independence, communication and confidence in everyday life.

Designed for children with Level 2 and Level 3 autism, Whizkid Games combines rigorous research with goal-based mini games. The new app has been designed in alignment with the DSM-5 autism framework and integrates evidence-based principles with creative play. Development involved medical experts, educators and families, with continuous attention to accessibility so activities remain structured, low pressure and highly engaging.

The app allows children to practise problem-solving, social understanding and self-expression in ways that feel natural and enjoyable. Gentle milestone tracking and positive feedback give children a sense of achievement while providing parents and carers with clear opportunities to observe and celebrate progress.

Within safe, imaginative environments, friendly characters guide and model essential daily skills: Kody the Koala supports non-verbal gestures and shared attention, Bob the Train encourages comfortable eye contact, and Eric the Dinosaur teaches simple turn-taking and transactional interactions. Each activity is crafted to reduce anxiety through short sessions, clear visual cues and adaptable pacing, allowing children to explore and learn at their own pace. Families can participate, monitor progress and help transfer new skills from the app into real-world routines. Play spans coping with change, transactions, matching emotions, non-verbal gestures, grouping objects, schedules, finding a route and making eye contact.

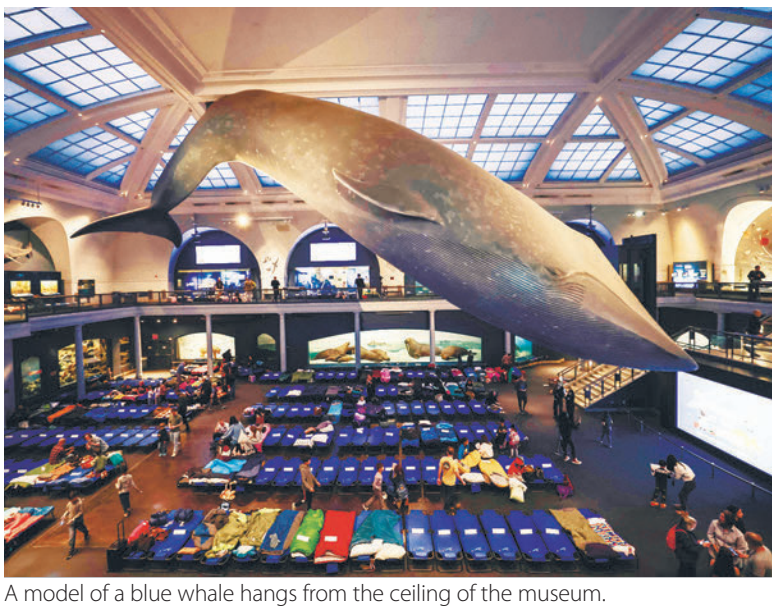
Whizkid Games is available on the Apple App Store and Google Play.

Autism Games is including six free games in the Whizkid Games app in support of inclusive and accessible learning experiences for all families, educators and schools downloading the app globally.



The app allows children to practise problem-solving, social understanding and self-expression in ways that feel natural and enjoyable.

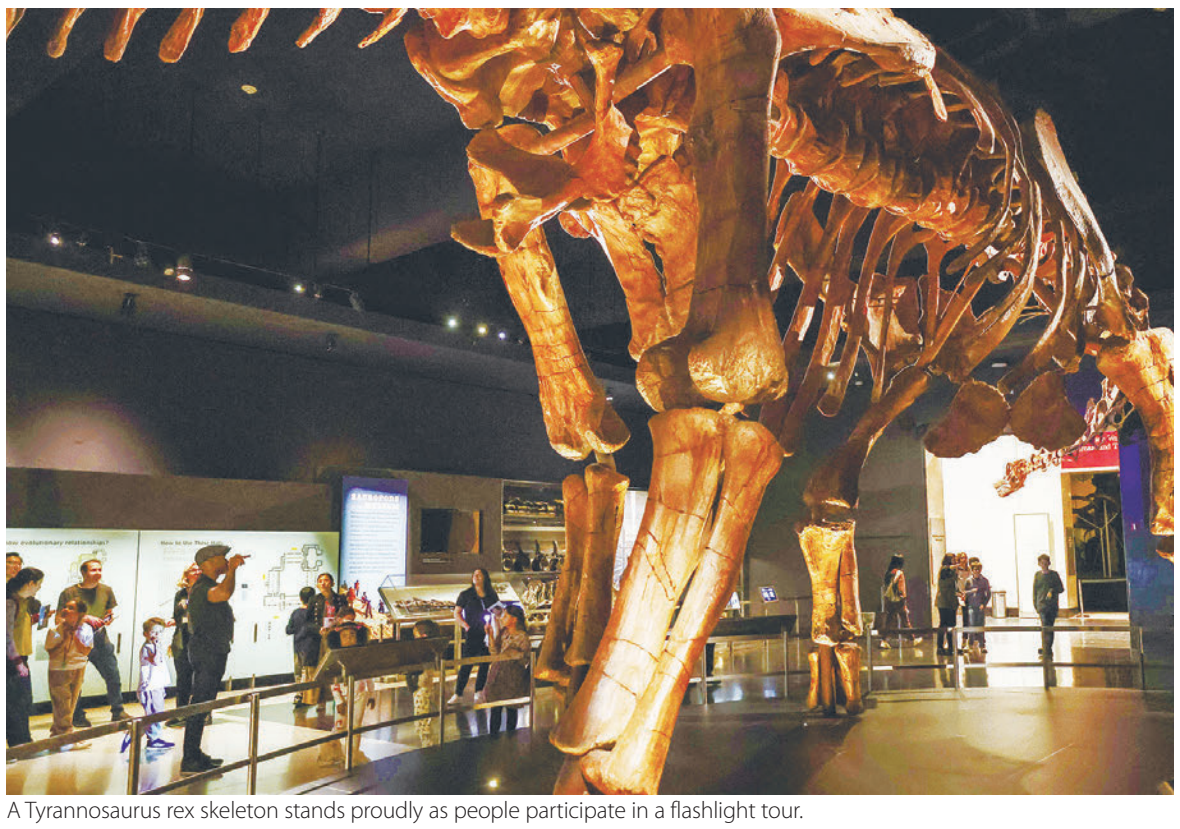
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A model of a blue whale hangs from the ceiling of the museum.

# Real-life night at museum

## Film-inspired programme returns to New York institution



A Tyrannosaurus rex skeleton stands proudly as people participate in a flashlight tour.



The programme is designed for children and their caregivers.

**IT** is nearly 10pm on Friday night and a group of children shine their flashlights on the imposing skeleton of a Tyrannosaurus rex.

Though the scene seems like something out of a movie, it is in fact a whimsical sleepover at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Once a month, and for a not insignificant fee, parents and kids can once again spend the night at the venerable institution – a programme that had been suspended since the start of the coronavirus pandemic.

"We live really close to this place. So we can come here anytime we want. It's crazy to sleep (here) – like, I don't know who would come up with this crazy idea," said eight-year-old Jake Nelson.

Jake, nestled into his sleeping bag on a cot underneath the museum's gigantic suspended model of a blue whale, said he was "so happy to be here".

The museum first launched its "Night at the Museum" programmes in 2006, riding the success of the movie of the same name, released that year, starring Ben Stiller as a security guard who realises the animals and fossils come to life overnight.

The return of the sleepovers is good news for the museum and its visitors.

"They were an iconic part of our itinerary here and very sought after by all of our visitors. Unfortunately, during the pandemic, we had to pause the experience for a few years, but we really wanted to take a pause and understand how we can make this experience exciting and memorable for our visitors, and now we're here," Aaron Anleu, senior director of visitor service, said.

Friday's overnight visit was sold out, as are the November and December events, but in the end, a few cots were empty when the lights dimmed.

A few hundred children ages six to 12 arrived at the museum at 6pm with their parents or other caregivers, sleeping bags and pillows in tow. Some were already wearing their pajamas.

For a fee starting at US$225 (RM948) a person, attendees get flashlight tours of exhibits including the fossil halls, do scavenger hunts, play trivia games and have bedtime snacks. Breakfast is served before the event ends.

Admission also includes a souvenir and a voucher for free admission during regular hours.

**Tours, karaoke**

Amid the games, crafts, live presentations and self-guided visits to the live insect displays, one of the most popular events is karaoke.

Kids belt out a mix of Broadway tunes, viral YouTube hit *The Duck Song* and the inescapable soundtrack from the Netflix animated film *KPop Demon Hunters*.

Shortly before midnight, the children get into their beds to listen to a live reading of the 1993 children's book *The Night at the Museum* by Milan Trenc – the inspiration for the film.

Wake-up comes early at 7am, before the event ends at 8.30am.

"It's magical. I'm a lifelong New Yorker, and I've never done anything like this. There's the whale above us," said Jaclyn Rice Nelson, Jake's mother.

Her son skipped a few hours of the night's activities to read a *Harry Potter* book in the unusual setting.

"This is tiring. I think I've done a lot of stuff," Jake said.

His mother explained the pair had indeed visited several exhibits.

"We went up to the dinosaurs, and all the lights were off, and so it was like walking around with flashlights with these big, kind of scary dinosaurs. And that's just a very, very special experience," she said.

Hollywood media outlets have reported that a new *Night at the Museum* film is in the works. Stiller starred in the first three instalments. So the magic is set to endure. – AFP



Visitors set up camp for 'A Night at the Museum' at the American Museum of Natural History.



Visitors come ready with sleeping bags and pillows. – ***ALL PICS FROM AFP***

# Pointless return with plenty of padding

**TV SHOW** REVIEW

BY **MARK MATHEN VICTOR**

## *Alice in Borderland*s third season suffers from Squid Game-ification of series



Some of the new games are downright unfair, which goes against the lore.

**FIVE** years after surviving the deadly games in the Borderland and coming back to life, Arisu (Kento Yamazaki) and Usagi (Tao Tsuchiya) lead a relatively quiet and peaceful married life. However, she continues to hold on to the trauma of seeing her father commit suicide. At the same time, the memories from their time in the Borderland's games begin to return to the couple.

Obsessed with the afterlife and his theories involving the Borderland, a professor by the name of Ryuji Matsuyama (Kento Kaku) convinces Usagi to return to the games for answers by putting themselves into a coma.

Chasing after Usagi, with the help of Ann, Arisu puts himself in a cardiac arrest and once again finds himself inside the Borderland.

The second season of *Alice in Borderland* three years ago provided the perfect closure for Netflix's adaptation of Haro Aso's manga. In this third chapter, the series is revived with a new storyline, which by the end of its sixth episode, proves the season to be completely pointless.

As much as it is great to see the return of Arisu and Usagi as more mature characters, the show bends itself over backwards in an attempt to justify the third season's existence, beginning with the inciting event of Usagi returning to the Borderland instead of just going to therapy, which ironically is the field Arisu is training in.

The logic of everything else then starts falling apart the further the episodes stretch, with the big offender being how often Arisu is offered a choice between staying in the Borderland or going back to the world of living with his wife, with him always picking the latter.

*Alice in Borderland*, as a whole, has never shown any signs as to why he would ever choose to be a Borderland permanent resident. Yet this season wastes an inordinate amount of time on repeatedly creating scenes and situations that present this illusion of choice within each death game, which are also just rehashes or combinations of the games in previous seasons.

These are symptoms of a bigger problem, where the season is largely padded with inane filler content, which includes the background, boring slice-of-life information dumps for all the new characters the season introduces – a liberty that the characters of the original two seasons did not have until the second season.

All these problems eventually come to a head in the sixth episode, which has a 20-minute or so sequence involving Arisu, Usagi and Ryuji in a flood, shouting their names at each other, in a sequence that could have been edited down to a fraction of its length.

Once that pointlessly protracted sequence is over, the pieces of the puzzle, cobbled from this season's laundry list of problems, fall neatly into place as the real reason behind *Alice in Borderland's* revival is revealed: Netflix sets up the potential for a sequel set in America.

The same was done with the finale of *Squid Game*'s third season. As fun as it is seeing the old *Alice in Borderland* leads return, the "Squid Game-ification" of the series is a turn-off and heralds the inevitable drowning of Netflix with more lazy cash grabs.



The new season does little in developing the relationship between Usagi (left) and Arisu. ***– PICS FROM NETFLIX***




Clooney attends the AFI opening night premiere of *Jay Kelly* at the TCL Chinese Theatre in Hollywood, California. – ***PIC FROM AFP***

# George Clooney explores passage of time in Netflix film *Jay Kelly*

**GEORGE** Clooney plays an actor looking back at his past in Netflix's *Jay Kelly*, but in real life, the US star has his eyes on the future.

"I'm not really ready to look backwards and sort of rest on it," the 64-year-old actor said at the film's premiere at the American Film Institute festival in Los Angeles.

Unlike his title character in Jay Kelly, which will hit the big screen next month, Clooney does not want to dwell on the past.

"I sort of enjoy looking forward and seeing what's coming next," he said.

Directed by Noah Baumbach, *Jay Kelly* explores the emotional crisis of an actor after a three-decade career.

Obsessed with mending his relationship with his daughters, Clooney's character drags his manager, played by Adam Sandler, and press agent, played by Laura Dern, on a trip to Europe.

Along the journey, he reflects on his loneliness, past mistakes and the price of success.

"I am lucky enough to not be as unhappy as he is and to have really good friends and people that I like. I don't feel as isolated as he is," said Clooney of his character.

Sandler, 59, said the movie offers an interesting take on the passage of time, watching an actor like him "get older on camera".

But, he said, "I don't look back at work I wish I would have done."

Instead, "I do say... time is ticking, let's make sure we get it all in there, and make sure we get it all in there outside of movies, family and stuff like that."

"And if we're doing movies, let's do stuff that's going to bring joy to people."

*Jay Kelly* will be available on Netflix from Dec 5. – AFP

# Global recognition for sustainability

## MSU leads the way for sustainability with international recognition

**MANAGEMENT** and Science University (MSU) gained recognition as runner-up in the 2025 Global SDG Impact Award by the Netherlands-based accreditation council for entrepreneurial and engaged universities (ACEEU) through its Triple E awards.

The accolade was awarded under the People's Choice Category for MSU's health equity for affordable and rapid treatment (H.E.A.R.T) initiative, launched in 2024.

ACEEU accreditation is pivotal to MSU's engagement in sustainable global education.

MSU's inaugural ACEEU recognition was in 2019, as Asia's Most Entrepreneurial and Engaged University. In 2020, MSU was nominated as one of the finalists for the ACEEU Asia-Pacific E Awards for Lifetime Achievement in Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurial University of the Year, and Student-Driven Sustainability Project of the Year.

In further recognition, MSU was awarded Global Green University of the Year and ranked among the Top 5 Engaged Global Universities in 2023. In 2024, MSU also earned the accolade of Engaged and Sustainable University of the Year and secured third place for Entrepreneurial Leader of the Year in the 2024 Asia-Pacific Triple E Awards.

Adding to these milestones, MSU also hosted the 2024 ACEEU Asia-Pacific Forum in September, bringing together experts and delegates from more than 30 higher education institutions representing 15 countries.



2nd from left, MSU president and founder, Prof. Tan Sri Dato' Wira Dr. Mohd Shukri Ab Yajid, receives the trophy from MSU senior vice-president for industry linkages and entrepreneurship, Prof. Dr. Abdul Jalil Ghazali. Also present were senior vice-president for endowment and communication, Dato' Rosli Yusof (far left) and vice- president for media and strategic communication, Norizah Mohd Said (far right).

MSU's achievement with these awards adds to its global recognition and reflects the strong commitment and dedication of its community in implementing sustainable development initiatives on campus.

This is further supported by the university's consistent culture of excellence, sustainability, and integrity, not only within MSU but also through collaboration with partner universities, industry partners, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and other stakeholders.

MSU's research ecosystems were further strengthened with the establishment of MSU's Centre of Excellence, which includes the leadership and entrepreneurship advancement institute (LEAD), international centre for halal studies (ICHLAS), software engineering and digital innovation centre (SEnDI), artificial intelligence and cyber security centre (AICS), MSU clinical centre of excellence (MyCell), MSU centre for complementary and alternative medicine (MyCAM) and MSU centre of excellence for vision and eyecare (MSU i-CARE).

The postgraduate studies at the Management and Science University (MSU) offers advanced degrees at MBA, MSc and PhD levels covering wide areas in medicine, engineering, pharmacy, health sciences, information sciences, education & social sciences, business management and professional studies, and hospitality and culinary Arts. This area is offered under the School of Graduate Studies (SGS) and the Graduate School of Management (GSM).

Among the global mobility programmes offered at MSU are the Global Mobility Programme (GMP), Global Leadership Programme (GLP), and Global Internship Programme (GIP) — all supported by MSU Foundation's Scholarship for Mobility and International Learning Experiences (SMILE).

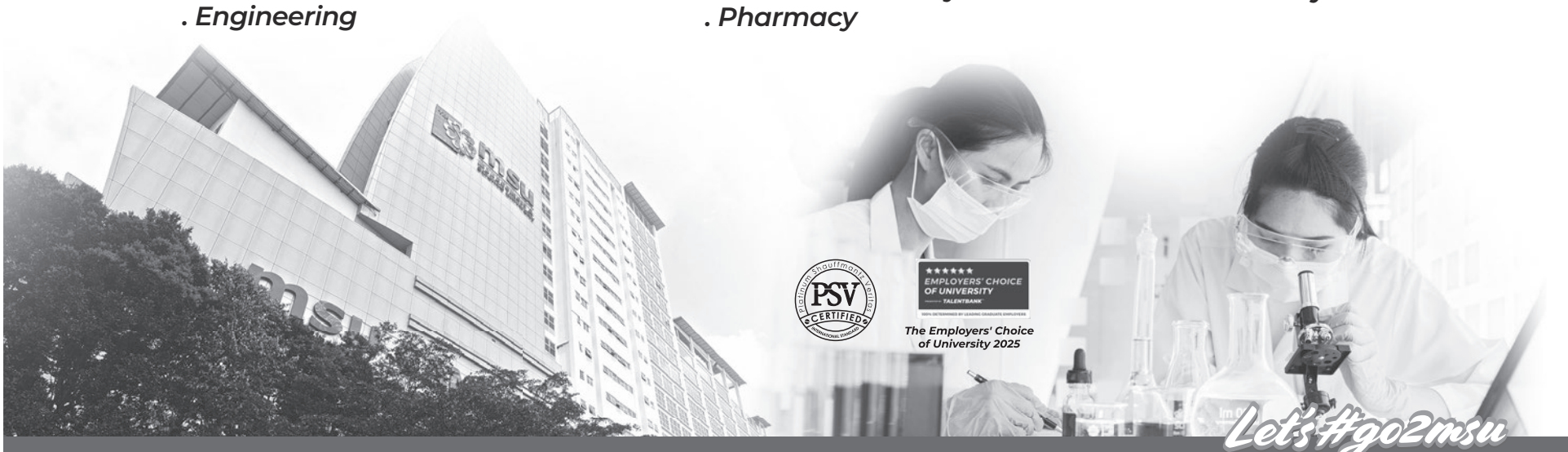
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# Cummins out of Ashes opener

**AUSTRALIA** fast bowler Pat Cummins *(pic)* will not be fit for the first Ashes Test in Perth next month and will be replaced as captain by Steve Smith, Cricket Australia said yesterday.

Cummins has been sidelined by a lower-back issue since July and was already a major doubt for the series opener against England, which starts on Nov 21.



Coach Andrew McDonald said Cummins had now resumed running and would be back bowling this week, offering hope the 32-year-old might be fit to take part in the day-night second test in Brisbane from Dec 4.

"It takes four plus weeks to get him up and running, and we've run out of time, unfortunately, but really optimistic and hopeful for the second Test match," McDonald told reporters in Canberra.

"He'll be back bowling this week, and that's a huge step… so we're on the journey to that second test match, and very hopeful that that will be a positive outcome."

Cummins has been an ever-present in the Australia side for Ashes clashes since his first Test against England in the 2017/18 series, helping Australia first win back and then retain the urn ever since.

McDonald admitted losing his captain and top fast bowler for the opening Test of a high-profile series was not ideal, but said there had been plenty of time to make contingency plans.

Even if the Australia squad for the series has not yet been announced, Scott Boland is almost certain to replace Cummins in the bowling attack at Perth Stadium alongside Josh Hazlewood and Mitchell Starc.

"When you talk about Scott Boland being the potential replacement, it's not a bad position to be in," McDonald added.

"And I suppose you get excited about when (Cummins) does come back. What an injection that will be to the group, a fully fit Pat Cummins returning at some stage during the Ashes."

Smith was sacked as captain in 2018 for his part in the Newlands ball-tampering scandal but has led the team six times in the absence of Cummins since his rehabilitation.

"We flip into Steve Smith being the captain, and we're incredibly fortunate to have such an experienced captain himself," McDonald said.

"They're a good working couple, so to speak … and Paddy will be around the group as well. So he'll come to Perth with us, I can declare that." – Reuters

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## 322 Notices

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF KLASBINA SDN. BHD. (Registration No.: 202001018003 (1374323-V)) (IN LIQUIDATION) (MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that at the General Meeting of the Company held at No. 60A-62A, Jalan Kamaruddin Isa, Fair Park, 31400 Ipoh, Perak on 23rd October, 2025 at 10:00 a.m. the following Special Resolution was duly passed:-

"That KLASBINA SDN. BHD. be wound up voluntarily and that Ms. Choong Mun Phin of B-2-13, Tingkat 2, Intan Business Centre 2, Lebuh Medan Ipoh, Bandar Baru Medan, 31400 Ipoh, Perak Darul Ridzuan be and is hereby appointed Liquidator for the purpose of winding-up the Company."

CHEW GUI LIANG
Director
Ipoh

Dated: 28th October, 2025

**IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 2016 AND IN THE MATTER OF KLASBINA SDN. BHD. (Registration No.: 202001018003 (1374323-V)) (IN LIQUIDATION) (MEMBERS' VOLUNTARY WINDING UP)**

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of the abovenamed Company which is being voluntarily wound up, are required, on or before 27th November, 2025 to send in their names and addresses with particulars of their debts and claims, and the names and addresses of their solicitors (if any) to the undersigned Liquidator and, if so required by notice in writing from the said Liquidator, are by their solicitors or personally to come and prove their said debts and claims at such time and place as shall be specified in such notice, or in default thereof, they will be excluded from the benefit of any distribution made before such debts and claims are proved.

CHOONG MUN PHIN
Liquidator
B-2-13, Tingkat 2,
Intan Business Centre 2
Lebuh Medan Ipoh,
Bandar Baru Medan
31400 Ipoh, Perak

Dated: 28th October, 2025

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT KUALA LUMPUR
IN THE FEDERAL TERRITORY OF KUALA LUMPUR
COMPANIES (WINDING-UP) PETITION NO.:
WA-28NCC-354-04/2025**

In the matter of AHMAD ZAKI SDN BHD [Company No.: 81250-W]
And
In the matter of Section 465(1)(e) read together with Section 466(1) of the Companies Act 2016
And
In the matter of the Companies (Winding-Up) Rules 1972

BETWEEN

ELEGANT BRIDGE BUILDERS SDN BHD [COMPANY NO.: 200601015520 (735272-H)]
…PETITIONER

AND

AHMAD ZAKI SDN BHD [COMPANY NO.: 198201001504 (81250-W)]
… RESPONDENT

**ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION**

**NOTICE** is hereby given that a Petition for the Winding-Up of the abovenamed Company by the High Court was on the day of 9th April 2025 presented by Elegant Bridge Builders Sdn Bhd [Company No.: 200601015520 (735272-H)], the above said Petitioning Company and that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at the **High Court of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur, Insolvency Court 2 (D11)** at **9:00 o'clock** in the morning **on 4th December 2025**; and any creditors or contributory of the said Company desiring to support or oppose the making of an Order on the said Petition may appear at the time of Hearing by himself or his Counsel for that purpose; and a copy of the Petition will be furnished to any creditor or contributory of the said Company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's address is A-3-05 (2nd Floor), Mayang Ave, Jalan SS 25/35, Taman Mayang, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

The Petitioner's Solicitor is **Messrs Chun Hoo & Partners** of Unit 719, Block A, Lobby 5, Damansara Intan, No.1, Jalan SS20/27, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan.
[Tel/Fax No.: 03-7733 8288]

Signed
……
Messrs Chun Hoo & Partners
Solicitors for the Petitioner

**NOTE** – Any person who intends to appear on the Hearing of the said Petition must serve on or send by post to **Messrs Chun Hoo & Partners**, notice in writing of his intention to do so. The notice must state the name and address of the person, or, if a firm, the name and address of the firm and must be signed by the person of firm, or their Solicitors (if any) and must be served, or if posted, must be sent by post in sufficient time to reach the abovenamed solicitors **not later than twelve o'clock noon of the 3rd day of December, 2025** (the day before the day appointed for the hearing of the Petition)
[Tel / Fax No.: 03-7733 8288]
[Email: loh@chunhoo.com.my & fong@chunhoo.com.my]
[Ref No.: CHP/EBBSB-AZSB/229/2024]

## 322 Notices

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA IN KOTA BHARU
IN THE STATE OF KELANTAN DARUL NAIM, MALAYSIA
COMPANIES (WINDING UP)
NO.: DA-28NCC-48-08/2025**

In the matter of Companies Act, 2016.

DAN

In the matter of Section 465 and Section 466 Companies Act, 2016.

DAN

In the matter of Companies (Winding Up) Rules 1972.

DAN

In the matter of **TAMAR HOUSE (M) SDN. BHD. [Company No: 201201039006 (1023484-T)]**

**BETWEEN**

**BIOSCA TAMARA, s.a.r.l**
**… PETITIONER**

**AND**

**TAMAR HOUSE (M) SDN. BHD. [COMPANY NO: 201201039006 (1023484-T)]**
**… RESPONDENT**

**ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that a Petition for the Winding-Up of the abovenamed Company by the High Court of **Kota Bharu, Kelantan Darul Naim** was on 11 August 2025 presented by BIOSCA TAMARA, s.a.r.l. and that the said Petition is directed to be heard before the judge at **Kota Bharu High Court, Kelantan Darul Naim** on the **12 November 2025** at **9.00 a.m.**; and any Creditor or Contributory of the said Company desiring to support or oppose the making of an order on the said Petition may at the time of hearing appear by himself or by his counsel for that purpose; and a copy of the Petition will be furnished to any Creditor or Contributory of the said Company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charge for the same.

The Petitioner's address is at Z.I Ben Arous B.P 192 2013 Ben Arous, Tunisia.

The Petitoner's solicitors are **M/s. Ghazi & Lim of Level 19, MWE Plaza, No. 8 Lebuh Farquhar, 10200 Georgetown, Pulau Pinang.**
[Tel No. 04-2633688]
[Fax No. 04-2633188]
[Ref: B4/24/JB/LJL/rzl]

Dated this 21st October 2025.

……Sgd……
Messrs Ghazi & Lim
Solicitors for the Petitioner

**Note**: Any person who intends to appear on the hearing of the said Petition must serve on or send by post to the abovenamed **Messrs. Ghazi & Lim, Advocates and Solicitors**, notice in writing of his intention to do so. The notice must state the name and address of the firm, and must be signed by the person, or firm, or by his or their solicitors (if any) and must be served, or if posted must be sent by post in sufficient time to reach the abovenamed not later than 12.00 o'clock noon on the 11th November 2025 (a day before the date fixed for the hearing of the said Petition).

## 322 Notices

**IN THE HIGH COURT OF MALAYA AT KUALA LUMPUR
(COMMERCIAL DIVISION)
COMPANIES (WINDING UP) NO.
WA-28NCC-911-09/2025**

In the matter of Section 465 (1) (e) of the Companies Act 2016

And

In the matter of ALM TRADING SDN BHD (COMPANY NO. 608093-V)

BETWEEN

CS NAM SDN BHD
(Company No. 857580-P)
…PETITIONER

AND

ALM TRADING SDN BHD
(Company No. 608093-V)
… RESPONDENT

**ADVERTISEMENT OF PETITION**

NOTICE is hereby given that a Petition for the Winding-Up of the abovenamed Company by the High Court was on the 4th September 2025 presented by CS NAM SDN BHD (Company No. 857580-P), the above Petitioner Company and the said Petition is directed to be heard before the Court sitting at the **High Court of Malaya at Kuala Lumpur, Insolvency Court 1 (D10) – Level 5, Left Wing at 9.00 o'clock in the morning on 10th November 2025** and any creditors or contributory of the said Company desiring to support or oppose the making of an Order on the said Petition may appear at the time of Hearing by himself or his Counsel for that purpose; and a copy of the Petition will be furnished to any creditor or contributory of the said Company requiring the same by the undersigned on payment of the regulated charged for the same.

The Petitioner's address is No. 20A, Lorong 2D, Kampung Melayu Subang, 40150 Shah Alam, Selangor Darul Ehsan.

The Petitioner's Solicitors is Messrs Kinv's Law Office of D-2-53, Block Dahlia, PJU 6A, Sprint Highway, 47400 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan. [Email : kinvlawoffice@gmail.com].

Signed
……
Messrs Kinv's Law Office
Solicitors for the Petitioner

**NOTE**-Any person who intends to appear on the Hearing of the Said Petition must serve on or send by post to Messrs Kin's Law Office, notice in writing of his intention to do so. The notice must state the name and address of the person, or, if a firm and must be signed by the person of firm, or their Solicitors(if any) and must be served, or if posted, must be sent by post in sufficient time to reach the abovenamed solicitors not later than twelve o'clock noon of 9th November 2025 (the day before the date appointed for the hearing of the Petition)
Tel No. 03-7733 8279
Fax No. 03-7732 8279
Email : kinvlawoffice@gmail.com
Ref No. KLO/1371/CSNAM/WUP

## 322 Notices

**DALAM MAHKAMAH MAJISTRET DI KUALA LUMPUR
DALAM WILAYAH PERSEKUTUAN, MALAYSIA
GUAMAN NO:
WA-A72NCVC-2949-08/2025**

ANTARA

CONNAUGHT AVENUE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
(NO. PENDAFTARAN: PTG/WP.20/1/3092)
… PLAINTIF

DAN

1. SERI FARIZAN BINTI AHMAD FUAD
(No. K/P: 790721065584)

2. ZHAFRIZAN BIN ABU BAKAR
(No. K/P: 860516145025)
… DEFENDAN-DEFENDAN

**NOTIS PENYAMPAIAN GANTI BENTUK IKLAN**

Kepada :

Zhafrizan bin Abu Bakar
C-0807, Connaught Avenue
Service Apartment
No. 38, Jalan 9
Taman Bukit Cheras
56000 Kuala Lumpur

**AMBIL PERHATIAN** bahawa satu tindakan telah dikemukakan terhadap kamu di Mahkamah Majistret Kuala Lumpur melalui Writ No. WA-A72NCVC-2949-08/2025 oleh CONNAUGHT AVENUE MANAGEMENT CORPORATION (NO. PENDAFTARAN: PTG/WP.20/1/3092) bagi memohon Perintah yang berkaitan dengannya di mana Mahkamah telah memerintahkan bahawa Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 11/08/2025 disampaikan kepada kamu dengan cara penyampaian ganti dengan menampalkan sesalinan Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 11/08/2025 di Papan Notis Mahkamah Majistret di Kuala Lumpur dan di alamat terakhir C-0807, Connaught Avenue Service Apartment, No. 38, Jalan 9, Taman Bukit Cheras, 56000 Kuala Lumpur dan mengiklankan di surat khabar tempatan, The Sun.

Bahawa penyampaian dan pengiklanan tersebut hendaklah menjadi penyampaian yang sempurna dalam masa empat belas (14) hari dari tarikh penampalan dan pengiklanan tersebut.

**SILA AMBIL PERHATIAN** bahawa Writ Saman dan Pernyataan Tuntutan bertarikh 11/08/2025 telah ditetapkan untuk pengurusan kes pada 10/11/2025 melalui E-review jam 09.00 pagi dan sekiranya kamu atau peguamcara kamu gagal untuk hadir, pada tarikh yang ditetapkan, maka satu penghakiman boleh dibuat terhadap kamu.

Bertarikh pada

t.t.
……
Peguamcara Plaintif
Tetuan Law Office of Paul

**NOTIS IKLAN** ini difailkan oleh Tetuan Law Office of Paul yang beralamat di 29-4, Block E1, Jalan PJU 1/42, Dataran Prima, 47301 Petaling Jaya, Selangor Darul Ehsan, Peguamcara bagi Plaintif yang disebutkan di atas. Tel No: +603-7887 5668 Fax No: +603-7886 8665 Email: paulaisu.associates@gmail.com (Ruj kami: PA/CAMC/LIT/DR/659-25(SERI FARIZAN)

## 322 Notices

**DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SEREMBAN
DALAM NEGERI SEMBILAN DARUL KHUSUS, MALAYSIA
PENGGULUNGAN SYARIKAT
NO: NA-28NCC-45-10/2025**

Dalam perkara Seksyen 465 dan 466 Akta Syarikat 2016

Dan

Dalam perkara Kaedah-Kaedah (Penggulungan) Syarikat 1972

Dan

Dalam perkara CTY Plantations and Trading Sdn Bhd (No Syarikat 201501030217 (1155541-V)

ANTARA

1. CHEW KHIAN KEE
(No. K/P: 660116-05-5091)
2. CHEW KHIAN KANG
(No. K/P: 671205-05-5249)
...PEMPETISYEN-PEMPETISYEN

DAN

CTY PLANTATIONS AND TRADING SDN. BHD.
(No. Syarikat 201501030217 (1155541-V)
...RESPONDEN

**PENGIKLANAN PETISYEN PENGGULUNGAN**

**NOTIS ADALAH DENGAN INI DIBERI** bahawa suatu petisyen untuk penggulungan syarikat oleh Mahkamah Tinggi Seremban, telah pada 7 Oktober 2025 dikemukakan oleh CHEW KHIAN KEE (No. K/P: 660116-05-5091) dan CHEW KHIAN KANG (No. K/P: 671205-05-5249). Dan bahawa Petisyen tersebut diarahkan supaya dibicarakan di Mahkamah Tinggi Seremban pada **24 November 2025 jam 9.00 pagi** dan di mana pihak pemiutang atau penyumbang Syarikat tersebut yang berniat untuk menyokong atau menentang sesuatu perintah mengikut Petisyen tersebut boleh hadir secara peribadi atau melalui peguamcaranya pada masa bicara dan sesalinan Petisyen tersebut akan dibekalkan oleh pihak yang bertandatangan di bawah ini kepada mana-mana pemiutang atau penyumbang syarikat tersebut yang memintanya dengan membuat bayaran yang ditetapkan.

Alamat Pempetisyen adalah No. 53, Jalan Sg Kapar Indah 6, Taman Sg Kapar Indah, 42200 Kapar Selangor.

Peguamcara bagi pihak Pempetisyen –Tetuan Krishna Dallumah & Indran of G-2-12, Block G Plaza Damas, Jalan Sri Hartamas 1, 50480 Kuala Luimpur [Tel: 03-64199288 Fax: 03-64199277] [Ref: KDI/KD/KL/033/20/yg]

Bertarikh 21 Oktober 2025

t.t
……
TETUAN KRISHNA DALLUMAH & INDRAN
Peguamcara bagi Pempetisyen

**Peringatan**- Sesiapa yang ingin hadir pada perbicaraan Petisyen tersebut hendaklah menyampaikan, atau menghantar dengan pos, kepada Tetuan Krishna Dallumah & Indran., yang dinamakan di suatu notis bertulis tentang niatnya sebegitu. Notis tersebut mestilah menyatakan nama dan alamat pihak berkenaan, atau jika ia sebuah firma, dan mestilah ditandatangani oleh pihak atau firma berkenaan atau peguamcaranya, jika ada. Notis hendaklah disampaikan atau jika dihantar dengan pos, hendaklah dihantar dalam jangkamasa yang mencukupi, supaya sampai kepada pihak yang dinamakan di atas sebelum jam 12.00 tengah hari pada 23 November 2025.

## BRIEFS

### Sinner fights back to beat Zverev

**ITALIAN** top seed Jannik Sinner produced a spirited comeback to defeat Germany's Alexander Zverev 3-6, 6-3, 7-5 in the Vienna Open final yesterday, securing his fourth ATP Tour title of the season and his second triumph in Austria's capital. Sinner, who beat Zverev in straight sets at this year's Australian Open, has now won 21 consecutive matches on indoor hardcourts. The 24-year-old has now also notched 22 tour-level titles and 51 career wins against fellow top-10 players. The world No. 2 banged down 11 aces and unleashed 44 winners in a thrilling contest that lasted two hours and 28 minutes. "It feels amazing," Sinner said. "It was such a difficult start in the final for me. Down a break … I had some chances in the first set, couldn't use them. He was serving very well. I tried to stick there mentally. Trying to play my best tennis when it counts. Third set was a bit of a roller-coaster. I was feeling very well the ball at times. I tried to push. Very happy to win another title. It's very special."

### Fonseca bags biggest career title

**BRAZILIAN** teenager Joao Fonseca clinched the biggest title of his career yesterday, storming past Spanish eighth seed Alejandro Davidovich Fokina 6-3, 6-4 to win the Swiss Indoors Championships in Basel. The victory marks the 19-year-old's second tour-level title, his maiden triumph coming in Buenos Aires in February, and his first at the ATP 500 level. Fonseca also became the first Brazilian to claim a title above the ATP 250 level since former world No. 1 Gustavo Kuerten won the ATP Masters 1000 in Cincinnati back in 2001. "It is crazy," Fonseca said. "I want to thank my family and my coaches who helped me achieve this amazing effort." He added: "My parents just came from Brazil. They were coming to Paris and changed their flights and came here one hour before the match with my uncles. It is just amazing to have them here for the biggest title of my career." Fonseca's triumph will propel him into the top 30 of the ATP world rankings for the first time when the updated standings are released overnight.

322 Notices

**PERISYTIHARAN JUALAN**
**DALAM MAHKAMAH TINGGI MALAYA DI SUNGAI PETANI**
**PERMOHONAN UNTUK PERLAKSANAAN NO: KB-38-713-07/2025**

Dalam perkara mengenai Seksyen 256 dan 257 Kanun Tanah Negara, 1965
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Gadaian Perserahan No: 10389/2015 (bertarikh : 21/05/2015) ke atas semua bahagian tanah yang dipegang di bawah **Hakmilik Sementara No. H.S.(D) 124869, PT 3225, Mukim Bandar Amanjaya, Daerah Kuala Muda, Kedah**
Dan
Dalam perkara mengenai Aturan 83 Kaedah-Kaedah Mahkamah, 2012

**ANTARA**
**Public Bank Berhad (No. Syarikat : 6463-H)**
**...PLAINTIF**
**DAN**
**Tan Leong San (No. Kad Pengenalan : 540619075493)**
**...DEFENDAN**

Menurut Perintah Mahkamah Tinggi Malaya di **SUNGAI PETANI** mengenai Perintah Jualan dan Perintah bertarikh **8 Oktober 2024** dan **6 Oktober 2025**, adalah dengan ini diisytiharkan bahawa Timbalan Pendaftar/Penolong Kanan Pendaftar Pusat Operasi e-Lelong di Kuantan

**AKAN MENJUAL SECARA**
**LELONG AWAM**
**Pada Hari Selasa, 18 November 2025, Pada Jam 11:00 pagi,**
**SECARA ELEKTRONIK DI LAMAN WEB e-LELONG, PUSAT OPERASI e-LELONG,**
**KOMPLEKS MAHKAMAH KUANTAN, PAHANG DARUL MAKMUR**

**NOTA: Bakal pembeli adalah dinasihatkan agar membuat carian Hakmilik secara rasmi di Pejabat Tanah dan memeriksa semua tanggungan, bebanan serta mengenal pasti dengan tepat hartanah tersebut sebelum jualan lelongan dijalankan.**

Sila layari https://elelong.kehakiman.gov.my/bidderweb

**BUTIR-BUTIR HAKMILIK:**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **No. Hakmilik** | : | Hakmilik Sementara No. H.S.(D)124869 |
| **No. Lot** | : | PT 3225 |
| **Mukim / Daerah / Negeri** | : | Bandar Amanjaya / Kuala Muda / Kedah |
| **Pegangan** | : | Hakmilik Kekal |
| **No. Petak/No. Tingkat/ No. Bangunan** | : | |
| **Keluasan Tanah** | : | 4447.6480000000 kaki persegi<br>413.2000000000 meter persegi |
| **Pemilik Berdaftar** | : | Tan Leong San |
| **Syarat Nyata** | : | RUMAH TERES Tanah yang terkandung dalam hakmilik ini hendaklah digunakan sebagai tapak untuk satu bangunan kediaman (rumah teres) sahaja. |
| **Sekatan Kepentingan** | : | Tiada |
| **Bebanan / Lain-Lain** | : | Charged to Public Bank Berhad, 6463-H vide Presentation No. 10389/2015, PA No.: 54/2006 and registered on 4 June 2015. |
| **Kawasan Rizab** | : | |
| **Kaveat** | : | |

**LOKASI DAN PERIHAL HARTANAH :**
Hartanah tersebut adalah **A corner unit double-storey terraced house** yang beralamat pos di **No. 925, Jalan Saujana 2/3, Bandar SP Saujana, 08000, Sungai Petani, Kedah**
**HARGA RIZAB :**
Hartanah tersebut akan dijual atas **"sepertimana sedia ada"** tertakluk kepada satu harga rizab sebanyak **RM 468,000.00 (RINGGIT MALAYSIA: EMPAT RATUS ENAM PULUH LAPAN RIBU SAHAJA)** dan kepada syarat-syarat jualan yang dilampirkan. Pembida yang berminat hendaklah mendepositkan 10% daripada harga rizab dalam bentuk **Bank Draf** di atas nama **PUBLIC BANK BERHAD 1 HARI BEKERJA** sebelum tarikh lelong awam. Baki harga belian hendaklah dibayar oleh pembida yang berjaya kepada **PUBLIC BANK BERHAD** dalam tempoh **seratus dua puluh (120)** hari dari tarikh jualan. Untuk butir-butir selanjutnya, sila berhubung dengan:-

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Firma Guaman** | : | **WONG-CHOOI & MOHD NOR** |
| **Alamat** | : | **NO. 27, 1ST & 2ND FLOOR**<br>**JALAN MAJU JAYA**<br>**PUSAT PERNIAGAAN MAJU JAYA, 14000, PG, MY** |
| **No. Telefon** | : | **04-5398855** |
| **No. Fax** | : | **04-5395855** |
| **No. Rujukan** | : | **WCMN(BM)/PBB(SP)-HL/2024-273/TLS(RS/j)** |


# Piastri sees potential for progress

**MCLAREN'S** Oscar Piastri surrendered the Formula One championship lead to teammate Lando Norris after the Mexico City Grand Prix yesterday but the Australian sounded an upbeat note about his progress and said he had taken steps to unlock his car's pace.

Piastri's fifth-place finish saw race winner Norris move one point ahead in the standings with four rounds remaining.

Piastri was denied a shot at taking fourth in the race due to a virtual safety car in the last two laps.

"It wasn't so much the pace of the car because the car was pretty quick this weekend," said Piastri, who started from seventh place on the grid.

"It was more just trying to unlock it, and I felt like I've potentially made some steps in doing that today.

"Yesterday it became obvious after the (qualifying) session that there was a few things I needed to change pretty majorly in how I was driving."

The Australian dropped to ninth in a chaotic first lap, and to 11th after his first pit stop on lap 25, but battled back with a two-stop strategy that paid off.

He passed Mercedes' rookie Kimi Antonelli during his second pit stop and then moved ahead of the Italian's teammate George Russell with 10 laps remaining.



Oscar Piastri. – *REUTERSPIC*

Piastri would have remained top of the standings had he managed to snatch fourth from Haas's Oliver Bearman but the virtual safety car put paid to his chances.

"Obviously when your teammate wins the race, finishing fifth is nothing that extravagant," Piastri said.

"I've just had to drive very differently the last couple of weekends, or I've not driven differently when I should have.

"I think that's been a little bit strange to get my head around because I've been driving exactly the same as I have all year.

"It's just the last couple of weekends the car or the tyres or something required quite a different way of driving.

"I've tried to change it up a bit today and once we analyse if it's effective or not that will hopefully help see some progress." – Reuters

# 'I can't stop laughing'

## *Norris unfazed by crowd boos after Mexico triumph*

**LANDO NORRIS** shrugged off boos from the Mexican crowd yesterday after the Briton seized back the Formula One championship lead from teammate Oscar Piastri with a dominant win from pole position.

The boos, the reason for which was unclear, could be heard as Norris spoke after the race and as he took the top step of the podium at the Autodromo Hermanos Rodriguez.

"People can do what they want, honestly. They have the right to do it if they want to do it. So I think that's sport sometimes," he told reporters.

"I don't know why I can't stop laughing when I get booed. I think it makes it more entertaining for me. So, yeah, they can keep doing it if they want.

"Of course, you don't want it. I prefer if people cheer for me. But I don't know. I just concentrate on doing my things. It was the same in Monza and a few other places."

A Mexican reporter suggested to Norris in a later press conference that some fans felt he was being gifted the championship at the expense of his Australian teammate.

He said a recent poll for his publication posed the question, "What should Lando do?", with the most popular answer being "return the three points".

The reference was to this year's Italian Grand Prix where Norris was leading the race but lost out to Piastri on a slow second pit stop, with the team then ordering the drivers to reverse positions to finish second and third.

The situation had been the opposite in Hungary last year, where Norris let Piastri past to win on team orders.

Other reports indicated local fans were still upset by comments Norris made about home hero Sergio Perez last year when the Mexican was being trounced by teammate Max Verstappen, third yesterday, at Red Bull.

Whatever the reason, Norris said they had a right to think what they wanted.

"As a team, of course, we try and do things fairly," he said.

"But, yeah. Like Oscar deserved the win last year in Budapest, I deserved to be ahead at Monza. Simple as that."

Regarding the title race, the 25-year-old added: "It's one weekend at a time. I'm happy, focused on myself, keep my head down, it's working at the minute."

*Sky Sport* F1 pundit Jamie Chadwick, a three-time W Series champion, slammed the boos, saying: "I hate it, I hate booing for anyone. That needs to be applauded, not booed."

Ex-F1 driver Karun Chandhok also insisted he "hates" booing.

Norris is now one point ahead of Piastri and 36 ahead of Verstappen heading into the next race in Brazil on Nov 8. – Reuters/Agencies



McLaren's Lando Norris celebrates with the winner's trophy on the podium after winning the Mexico City GP yesterday. – *REUTERSPIC*

# Bearman misses out on first podium but proud of fourth place

**OLIVER BEARMAN** came agonisingly close to delivering Haas their first Formula One podium after soaking up the pressure to finish fourth in yesterday's Mexico City Grand Prix.

The 20-year-old found himself in third place after an action-packed start and went toe-to-toe with seven-times world champion Lewis Hamilton and Red Bull's Max Verstappen.

Verstappen, who is vying for a fifth straight drivers' title, dashed his podium dreams by taking third behind Ferrari's Charles Leclerc and race winner Lando Norris of McLaren, but Bearman was still proud of his achievement.

"Hamilton and Max had a bit of a coming together at the start and I benefited from that," Bearman told reporters.

"I had him in my mirrors for a long time. So it was probably the most pressure I've ever had in a race scenario."

The Ferrari Academy graduate, who joined Haas this season, said the team had opted to defend fourth place rather than risk it all for third.

"I got the call to box very late and I was super confused, but I'm not going to, you know, go against the team order," he said.

"It seems like we would have been taking a big risk to stay out and try and finish third.

"And that potentially could have cost us more than fourth; we could have been further back, so I think we did the right job."

Despite missing out on the podium, Bearman's performance has boosted both his confidence and Haas's position in the constructors' championship, with the team moving up to eighth place with four races remaining.

Teammate Esteban Ocon finished ninth.

"Big step of confidence heading into Brazil now. So I was looking for Haas's first podium. That was my goal," said Bearman.

"But fourth is great as well. And two cars in the points. That's a great result for us." – Reuters

# Yamal can learn from Real lessons

**LAMINE YAMAL'S** words before the *Clasico* caused more of a stir than his subdued performance on the pitch as Barcelona fell to defeat, and the 18-year-old star can take some valuable lessons moving forward.

For the first time the teenager became the main focus of an entire stadium's ire after comments he made before Real Madrid's 2-1 victory yesterday became the focus of heavy criticism in the capital.

Joking on a social media stream appearance Yamal suggested Real Madrid "steal" and "complain", and he was harangued by the Santiago Bernabeu crowd as a result during yesterday's defeat.

Madrid players, led by captain Dani Carvajal, headed towards Yamal to remonstrate with him, as the ill-tempered ending to the game boiled over after the final whistle.

Yamal will learn that if he says anything remotely controversial it will always be blown up by Madrid media outlets, as is true on the other side of the rivalry.

Barcelona's assistant coach, Marcus Sorg, filling in for the suspended Hansi Flick, said the atmosphere might have affected Yamal's flat display.

"It could be (that), probably a little bit, because he is also learning to deal with the crowd, the shouting and whistles from spectators," said Sorg.

"It's normal. Normally he's very motivated and plays well. Today it was not so easy for him."

The forward has been quick to fire out jibes on social media, and last season said Real Madrid players can speak "when they beat me".

However in a rivalry as intense and storied as the *Clasico* there will always be swings of dominance, highs and lows.

"Talk is cheap," wrote Jude Bellingham, Real Madrid's match-winner, on an *Instagram* post in a thinly-veiled retort to Yamal.

Barcelona midfielder Frenkie de Jong criticised Carvajal, 33, for arguing with Yamal in public.

"If Carvajal wanted to speak to Lamine, he could do so in private," said De Jong.

"If he thinks he shouldn't do things like (those comments) he could call him. They're teammates (with Spain), they know each other. Why do you have to make a scene on the pitch?"

On the other hand Real Madrid midfielder Aurelien Tchouameni said Yamal's comments were not particularly upsetting.

"They're just words, and there's no bad intention. It motivates us a bit more, but if Lamine wants to talk, he can do so, there's no problem," Tchouameni told reporters.

"When I was little, I remember the exchanges between Barca and Real players before matches, and we liked that. In the end, the match is played on the pitch." – AFP

# Roma's Dybala ends goal drought

**PAULO DYBALA** scored his first Serie A goal of the season to give Roma a 1-0 victory at Sassuolo yesterday to lift them level on points with leaders Napoli.

After 16 minutes Dybala set up Bryan Cristante for a shot. When Arijanet Muric saved, Dybala pounced to put the rebound into the empty net.

It was the Argentinian's 130th Serie A goal but his first from open play since last December.

"These are three important points," said Dybala, whose team are hoping to deliver a first *Scudetto* for Roma since 2001.

"We knew we could move into first place before this match, but we're not getting carried away. The championship is still very long."

Under Gian Piero Gasperini, who took over in July, Roma have become stingy in defence but are struggling to score.

In eight games they have conceded three goals – two fewer than any other team – while scoring only eight.

Roma sit second behind reigning champions Napoli, who beat fourth-placed Inter Milan 3-1 on Saturday, on goal difference.

However, if two teams are level on points at the top of the table at the end of the season, the title will be decided in a play-off.

All four of Roma's defeats this season have come at home, including a loss to Viktoria Plzen in the Europa League on Thursday and against Inter Milan in Serie A the previous Saturday.

"I'm very satisfied because the team reacted well after two defeats this week," said Gasperini.

"The priority now is to win again at home. We have to reward our fans. At home, we have to be more effective."

AC Milan, held to a 2-2 draw by Pisa on Friday at the San Siro, dropped to third, a point behind.

Lazio extended Juventus' winless streak in all competitions to eight matches with a 1-0 victory at the Stadio Olimpico.

Juventus fell behind in just the ninth minute when Jonathan David carelessly gave the ball away inside his own half, before Toma Basic drilled in a deflected shot from outside the box.

The visitors thought they should have been awarded a penalty on the hour mark when Mario Gila appeared to trip Francisco Conceicao, but their appeals were in vain.

Lazio managed to hold on to an important three points, helped by an excellent save from Ivan Provedel to keep out a Khephren Thuram header with 15 minutes left.

The capital club moved into 10th, one point behind their beaten opponents.

"We are of course disappointed, we feel terrible, but there is always something missing in our matches. We are all responsible for this situation," said Juve coach Igor Tudor, insisting he is "not worried about his future". – AFP

# Jude back with a bang

*Bellingham claims La Liga leaders Real Madrid Clasico win over Barcelona*

**JUDE BELLINGHAM'S** goal helped Real Madrid beat Barcelona 2-1 to win a tense *Clasico* and move five points clear of their bitter rivals at the top of La Liga yesterday.

Champions Barcelona won all four times the teams were pitted against each other last season but in his first *Clasico* as Real Madrid coach, Xabi Alonso snapped that run.

Kylian Mbappe, who later missed a penalty, fired Madrid in front and although Fermin Lopez levelled for the visitors at the Santiago Bernabeu, Bellingham netted a second for the hosts before halftime which proved decisive.

Barca playmaker Pedri was sent off in the final stages for a second yellow card as tensions spilled over in the Spanish capital.

Madrid's victory means they have won nine of their opening 10 league games and Alonso's side proved against Barca they can triumph on the big occasion, following their derby humbling by Atletico Madrid in September.

Alonso said his team "needed this feeling of being able to win a big game" after last season's struggles against Barca.

"The team was very motivated, we had been talking about how important the game was beforehand, not just for the three points," explained Alonso.

"(But instead) for where (we) came from, for having a good game, deserving to win, and I am very happy for the boys above all because they needed this feeling of being able to win a big game, like *Clasicos* are."

The Spaniard's counterpart on the touchline was Hansi Flick's assistant Marcus Sorg, as the German coach was suspended following a red card the previous weekend as they scraped a victory over relegation-battling Girona.

"The season is long, we have 28 more games and we're not scared about the situation now," said Sorg after the defeat.

Barcelona were without several regular starters, including Raphinha, Robert Lewandowski and Dani Olmo among others, while Lamine Yamal still does not appear fully fit after a groin injury but started.

The teenager wound up Madrid fans last week by claiming *Los Blancos* "steal" and "complain" and his name was greeted with a chorus of jeers when read out before kickoff.

The hosts were awarded an early penalty when Yamal clashed with Vinicius Junior, but it was cancelled after a VAR review.

Madrid fans' ire at the officials grew when Mbappe blasted home from outside the area but the goal was ruled out for a milimetric offside against the French superstar.

Mbappe did not have long to wait before he could celebrate in earnest, after fine movement and a perfect pass by Bellingham sent him through on goal.

Arda Guler gave away possession in a dangerous area and Marcus Rashford, playing in his first *Clasico*, crossed for Lopez to blast the visitors level in the 38th minute.

Bellingham struck Madrid's second five minutes later to give *Los Blancos* a deserved advantage at the interval.

Sorg sent defender Ronald Araujo up front during nine minutes of stoppage time in desperation, but unlike the previous weekend it did not pay off.

Alonso hailed the match-winner after a week in which his goals were vital for the club, proving he is back to his best after returning from shoulder surgery.

"We saw it against Juventus, and today, and against Getafe (previous weekend), in the last week he's had three very good games," Alonso said.

"At first you need some minutes to get in gear, and it's gone even better than we expected after the last international break, when he was here and not with the national team.

"Jude is a player who is about feelings, on communicating and connecting, and that's why he has played some very good matches." – AFP




Real Madrid's Jude Bellingham (right) shoots at Barcelona's goal during their Spanish La Liga match yesterday. – REUTERSPIC

# Leverkusen 'shake off' PSG drubbing with Freiburg win

**BAYER LEVERKUSEN** found some solace at home oyesterday after a Champions League humbling by Paris Saint-Germain with a 2-0 win over Freiburg in the Bundesliga.

Dismantled 7-2 by the European champions at the same venue in midweek, Leverkusen got back to winning ways thanks to strikes by Ernest Poku and Edmond Tapsoba either side of the break.

Leverkusen midfielder Jonas Hofmann told *DAZN* his side "shook off the 7-2 defeat" to PSG with yesterday's victory.

Leverkusen, the 2023-24 double winners, have now won four in a row in the Bundesliga as part of a seven-match domestic unbeaten run.

Coach Kasper Hjulmand, who replaced the sacked Erik ten Hag two games into the league season, is yet to taste defeat in the Bundesliga.

The loss was Freiburg's first in the league since August.

These two sides played out a 2-2 draw in May but only three players who started for Leverkusen on Sunday were at the club last season.

After 22 minutes, Spain midfielder Aleix Garcia played a clever one-two with Poku, who hit a low shot into the bottom right corner to give the hosts the lead.

It was the eighth time in eight league games this season Leverkusen have scored first.

The hosts doubled up seven minutes into the second half when Tapsoba muscled through the Freiburg defence to head in an Alejandro Grimaldo cross.

With 15 minutes remaining, Freiburg were reduced to 10 men when Philipp Lienhart picked up a second yellow.

"I feel everything was decided even before the red card. It feels good," Hofmann added of Leverkusen's performance.

In Sunday's late game, Stuttgart came from a goal down to beat lowly Mainz 2-1 and climb past Borussia Dortmund and Leverkusen into outright third in the table.

Germany midfielder Nadiem Amiri converted a penalty to put Mainz in the lead after 41 minutes, but Chris Fuehrich brought Stuttgart level with an incredible dipping shot from well outside the box just before half-time.

Deniz Undav scored the winner for Stuttgart with 11 minutes remaining, collecting a pass from his own goalkeeper and chipping in to score his first goal of the season. – AFP

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SCAN ME

# Eze does it!

## *Arteta hails Eberechi as star haunts former club*

BY **PHILIP DUNCAN**

**MIKEL ARTETA** hailed Eberechi Eze for repaying a chunk of his £67.5 million (RM391m) transfer fee following his winning strike in Arsenal's 1-0 victory over Crystal Palace.

Eze fired home against his old club with a sumptuous finish six minutes prior to the interval as Arsenal saw out their seventh consecutive victory across all competitions.

It was a far from a spectacular performance from Mikel Arteta's men at the Emirates, but the triumph takes Arsenal four points clear of second-placed Bournemouth in the table, and six ahead of Manchester City following their 1-0 defeat at Aston Villa. Defending champions Liverpool are a point further back.

There was only a muted celebration from Eze following his goal against the club he served for five years. But it marked a much-needed first league strike in seven attempts for the England international since his big-money switch.

And Arteta, when asked if Eze's goal provided the kind of "magic moment" he was signed for, the Spaniard, replied: "Yes, 100%.

"That's what big players do and he's certainly a big player and hopefully that's going to give him a big boost and confidence to generate many more moments like this because that's the moment that sometimes defines a season.

"I didn't see any difference with him before the game. He is always super relaxed and always has a big smile on his face.

"It might have been inside him because he was at Palace for a long time, and he has such strong feelings and gratitude for that club. Today was a very special game for him."

Arsenal took just one point in their away fixtures at Newcastle and Fulham, and at home to West Ham and Crystal Palace last season.

This time around they have registered 12 points from 12, and Arteta continued: "I just told the boys that I value this victory more than any other victory this season because we knew the difficulty of it.

"We are where we are (in the League) and it is a credit to us because we've been very, very consistent.

"But it really doesn't mean anything other than let's keep doing a lot of things that we're doing really well. There are things to improve as well to give us better margins."

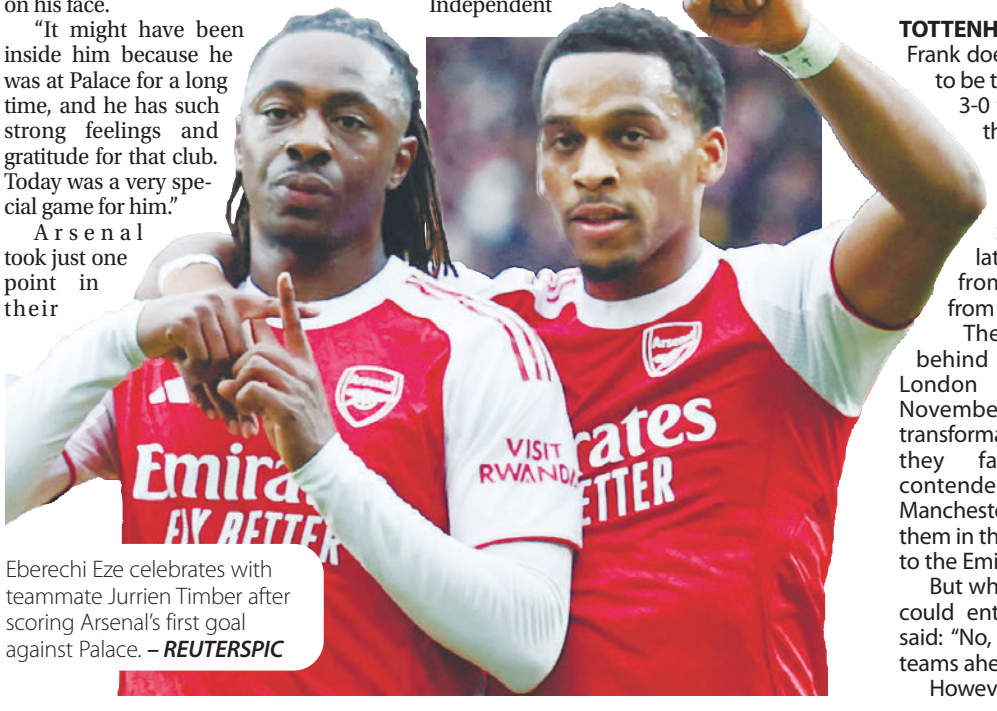
The only sour notes for Arsenal in their pursuit of a first League title in 22 years came with injuries to William Saliba, Declan Rice and Riccardo Calafiori.

The former did not emerge after the interval while Rice and Calafiori were replaced in the second half.

A cryptic Arteta added: "On William there were two things related to his substitution, and with Declan I don't really know because it was a knock. I don't know if it was his calf or Achilles. Tomorrow we will have more news."

Palace have now lost three of their last four games across all competitions and manager Oliver Glasner said: "When you give Eze a free shot inside the box it is very often a goal.

"We benefitted on many occasions last season but today we suffered. He scored the winning goal like this in the FA Cup final. Then I was pleased, but today I was the opposite. I was sad." – The Independent



Eberechi Eze celebrates with teammate Jurrien Timber after scoring Arsenal's first goal against Palace. – ***REUTERSPIC***

# Dyche rues 'down day' for Forest

BY **RACHEL STEINBERG**

**NEW** Nottingham Forest boss Sean Dyche blamed a "collective down day" and a "really poor decision" after his side slumped to a 2-0 defeat to high-flying Bournemouth in his first Premier League contest in charge.

Forest failed to build on the momentum generated by their Europa League victory last week, their first across all competitions since August, after goals from Marcus Tavernier and Junior Kroupi lifted the Cherries to second place in the table.

Tavernier's opener, scored directly from a corner, did not arrive without controversy. Replays appeared to show the goalscorer might have been the last to touch the ball before the set-piece was awarded.

Dyche said: "The first half we looked flat and there was not that energy or that spark. We just couldn't raise that edge that you need to play, and then the second half was slightly better.

"But I think it's compounded by a really poor decision which goes against us, I end up getting booked for no reason, in my opinion, because it's clearly the wrong decision, but that's the way it goes sometimes.

"Dealing with these setbacks are part of what football is, and certainly in the Premier League you've got to deal with them, and we didn't deal with them very well today."

Dyche admitted it was "incredibly frustrating" that VAR cannot be involved in decisions about corners, but felt the hosts were "the better side overall, and deserved to be in front at half-time, so no excuses there".

Bournemouth boss Andoni Iraola insisted it would be premature to celebrate the Cherries' standing in the top flight.

"For me, the 18 points is the most important thing," he said. "We'll play (Manchester) City away and (Aston) Villa away before the break. I would like to add more points.

"I don't care about the positions right now. The league is so compact that one win, one loss, you go five, six positions up and down, so now it's about the performances, how competitive we are.

"We will try to add what I know is going to be very difficult, to add more points before the break." – The Independent

# Frank plays down Spurs' title hopes

BY **CARL MARKHAM**



Micky van de Ven (3rd left) scores for Spurs against Everton at the Hill Dickinson Stadium yesterday. – ***REUTERSPIC***

**TOTTENHAM** head coach Thomas Frank does not consider his team to be title contenders despite a 3-0 victory at Everton lifting them into third.

Two first-half headers from Micky van der Ven were followed by Pape Sarr also nodding home late on to make it 13 points from a possible 15 away from home.

They sit just five points behind leaders and north London rivals Arsenal and November could be a transformative month for them as they face fellow top-four contenders Chelsea and Manchester United – both below them in the table – before heading to the Emirates Stadium.

But when asked whether Spurs could enter the title race Frank said: "No, I think there are a few teams ahead of us."

However, if they can improve their home form while continuing to eke out wins on the road without necessarily playing well they could make life uncomfortable for their rivals.

Van der Ven's prowess at set-pieces will certainly help in that regard, as he took his tally to five for the season.

"Top scorer? Not bad. I said you are a centreback, you need to score more, and he attacked the ball and got in there where it hurts," added Frank.

"I think he is really growing and taking some big steps, taking more leadership, defending better and better, using his pace and more clever positions than at the start of the season."

Everton fans were hugely aggrieved Jake O'Brien's potential equaliser was ruled out after VAR spotted Iliman Ndiaye and Jack Grealish in offside positions either side of goalkeeper Guglielmo Vicario but manager David Moyes had no complaints.

"I think the goal we got chalked off for offside was the correct decision," he said.

"At the time from the touchline it looked okay but I have just looked at it and I can't argue with it."

Everton conceded their first goals of the season from corners and that frustrated Moyes more than the performance.

"We actually played well. We have been undone by set-pieces, we are not happy about it but the other parts of the game there were lots of good things," he added.

"The players will always take responsibility and I will, we have been very good at set-pieces in the main but Thomas' teams have always been good. They got their head on them and we didn't.

"I am disappointed, I really am. There are a couple of things we could have done better." – The Independent

# Pereira calls for unity as fans turn on Wolves

**WOLVES** manager Vitor Pereira called for unity at Molineux after confronting furious fans following yesterday's damaging 3-2 defeat against Burnley.

Pereira's side are the only Premier League team yet to win this season and they sit bottom of the table with just two points from nine games.

A visit from promoted Burnley looked like an opportunity to finally secure a victory, but Zian Flemming struck twice to put the visitors in command.

Jorgen Strand Larsen's penalty and Marshall Munetsi's equaliser hauled Wolves level, only for Lyle Foster to bag Burnley's winner in the fifth minute of stoppage-time.

The atmosphere turned toxic after the final whistle and Pereira and Strand Larsen became involved in heated discussions with angry supporters in front of the South Bank.

Wolves fans brought an end to the contentious debate by chanting "you're getting sacked in the morning" at their manager.

They also taunted executive chairman Jeff Shi and owners Fosun, singing "you've sold the team, now sell the club" in reference to the summer departures of Matheus Cunha and Rayan Ait-Nouri to Manchester United and Manchester City respectively.

Pereira saved Wolves from relegation last season after replacing the sacked Gary O'Neil in December and recently signed a new contract.

But Wolves' woeful form means he faces a fight to avoid the same fate as O'Neil, just months after drinking with fans in a local pub to celebrate their survival.

"What I said is, we worked a lot and need to fight together. The team gave everything on the pitch to win," Pereira said of his post-match talk with the fans.

"We understand the frustration of the people and supporters but what I must say, if we fight united with them, we can win games and compete and achieve our targets. Without them it is impossible.

"If we win two or three games in a row, things will change. Two months ago they sing my name, because together with the work we did last season, we are competing in the Premier League and not the Championship.

"Now they sing my name to sack me. If I was a supporter, I feel proud of my team because they worked and showed the spirit, mentality and ambition to win the game." – AFP

## RESULTS & STANDINGS

### ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

**Arsenal 1** *(Eze 39)* **Crystal Palace 0, Aston Villa 1** *(Cash 19)* **Manchester City 0, Bournemouth 2** *(Tavernier 25, Kroupi 40)* **Nottingham Forest 0, Wolves 2** *(Strand Larsen 42-pen, Munetsi 45+4)* **Burnley 3** *(Flemming 14, 30, Foster 90+5)*, **Everton 0 Tottenham 3** *(Van de Ven 19, 45+6, Sarr 89)*.

| | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Arsenal | 9 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 3 | 22 |
| Bournemouth | 9 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 16 | 11 | 18 |
| Tottenham | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 17 | 7 | 17 |
| Sunderland | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 7 | 17 |
| Man City | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 17 | 7 | 16 |
| Man Utd | 9 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 15 | 14 | 16 |
| Liverpool | 9 | 5 | 0 | 4 | 16 | 14 | 15 |
| Aston Villa | 9 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 8 | 15 |
| Chelsea | 9 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 17 | 11 | 14 |
| Crystal Palace | 9 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 12 | 9 | 13 |
| Brentford | 9 | 4 | 1 | 4 | 14 | 14 | 13 |
| Newcastle | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 8 | 12 |
| Brighton | 9 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 14 | 15 | 12 |
| Everton | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 12 | 11 |
| Leeds | 9 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 14 | 11 |
| Burnley | 9 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 12 | 17 | 10 |
| Fulham | 9 | 2 | 2 | 5 | 9 | 14 | 8 |
| Nottm Forest | 9 | 1 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 17 | 5 |
| West Ham | 9 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 7 | 20 | 4 |
| Wolves | 9 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 7 | 19 | 2 |

### LA LIGA

**Mallorca 1** *(Maffeo 79)* **Levante 1** *(Etta Eyong 22)*, **Real Madrid 2** *(Mbappe 22, Bellingham 43)* **Barcelona 1** *(Lopez 38)*, **Osasuna 2** *(Budimir 37-pen, 45+1)* **Celta Vigo 3** *(Jutgla 26, 69, Duran 87)*, **Rayo Vallecano 1** *(Alemao 90+1)* **Alaves 0.**

| TOP 6 | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Real Madrid | 10 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 22 | 10 | 27 |
| Barcelona | 10 | 7 | 1 | 2 | 25 | 12 | 22 |
| Villarreal | 10 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 18 | 10 | 20 |
| Espanyol | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 14 | 11 | 18 |
| Atletico | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 16 | 10 | 16 |
| Real Betis | 9 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 15 | 10 | 16 |

### SERIE A

**Torino 2** *(Sabelli 63-og, Maripan 90)* **Genoa 1** *(Thorsby 7)*, **Sassuolo 0 Roma 1** *(Dybala 16)*, **Verona 2** *(Gagliardini 23, Orban 59)* **Cagliari 2** *(Idrissi 77, Felici 90+2)*, **Fiorentina 2** *(Gudmundsson 73-pen, Kean 90+3-pen)* **Bologna 2** *(Castro 25, Cambiaghi 52)*, **Lazio 1** *(Basic 9)* **Juventus 0.**

| TOP 6 | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Napoli | 8 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 15 | 8 | 18 |
| Roma | 8 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 8 | 3 | 18 |
| AC Milan | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 13 | 6 | 17 |
| Inter Milan | 8 | 5 | 0 | 3 | 19 | 11 | 15 |
| Bologna | 8 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 13 | 7 | 14 |
| Como | 8 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 9 | 5 | 13 |
| Atalanta | 8 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 12 | 6 | 12 |

### BUNDESLIGA

Stuttgart 2 Mainz 1, Bayer Leverkusen 2 Freiburg 0.

| TOP 6 | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| B. Munich | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 4 | 24 |
| RB Leipzig | 8 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 16 | 9 | 19 |
| Stuttgart | 8 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 13 | 7 | 18 |
| Dortmund | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 14 | 6 | 17 |
| Leverkusen | 8 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 18 | 11 | 17 |
| Frankfurt | 8 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 21 | 18 | 13 |

### FRENCH LIGUE 1

Lille 6 Metz 1, Rennes 1 Nice 2, Angers 2 Lorient 0, Auxerre 0 Le Havre 1, Lyon 2 Strasbourg 1.

| TOP 6 | P | W | D | L | F | A | Pts |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Paris SG | 9 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 19 | 8 | 20 |
| Lens | 9 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 14 | 8 | 19 |
| Marseille | 9 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 22 | 9 | 18 |
| Lyon | 9 | 6 | 0 | 3 | 13 | 9 | 18 |
| Lille | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 22 | 11 | 17 |
| Monaco | 9 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 18 | 13 | 17 |

# Klang Valley derby stalemate

*Red Giant, City Boys cancel each other out in fiery clash*

THE highly anticipated Klang Valley Derby between Selangor FC and Kuala Lumpur City FC ended in a goalless draw after both sides failed to find the net in their Super League clash at the Petaling Jaya City Council Stadium on Sunday night.

Selangor dominated the early exchanges, but KL City nearly stunned the hosts in the 25th minute through a golden opportunity by Victor Abril, who narrowly missed the target from the left side after receiving a fine pass from Nicolao Manuel.

Towards the end of the first half, Selangor goalkeeper Sikh Izhan Nazrel proved to be a solid last line of defence, denying a close-range header from Muhammad Safawi Rasid off a corner kick to maintain the 0-0 scoreline at halftime.

In the second half, both teams pushed harder in search of a breakthrough, resulting in several physical duels, including a clash between Selangor defender Richmond Ankrah and Safawi in the 66th minute, but the result ended in the teams sharing the spoils.

"My goal is to try to win every game possible. We built the movement well but in the finishing part you can see some players were running out of energy which made their movements less explosive and their decision making a bit slow," Red Giants head coach Christophe Gamel said after the match.

"However, on a positive note, we managed to take home a point and I was happy to see the players' mental reaction after the previous defeat. That was very important," added Gamel.

Meanwhile, at the Penang State Stadium in Batu Kawan, Imigresen FC (IFC) had to settle for a point after being held to a 2-2 draw by Sabah FC.

Both teams began cautiously before the home side broke the deadlock in the 27th minute through Brazilian striker Joao Pedro, who fired home a powerful shot off a pass from compatriot Eduardo Jose Sosa from the right flank to beat visiting goalkeeper Damien Lim Chien Khai.

In the second half, Sabah equalised in the 50th minute via Stuart Wilkin, following a fine move initiated by Miguel Angel Garrido Cifuentes to Fergus Tierney, whose strike hit the crossbar before Wilkin calmly converted the rebound.

Just three minutes later, Sabah took the lead when Cifuentes found the net to make it 2-1.

However, the hosts, guided by Yusri Che Lah, refused to give up and levelled the score in the 79th minute through a strike from Sosa.

Imigresen FC (IFC) head coach Yusri Che Lah lamented his players' inability to maintain their momentum in the second half which dashed their hopes of notching their first league win of the season.

"Of course, there is still a lot of work for my players because once again, we were punished early in the game and failed to maintain our rhythm in the second half.

"Not only the players, but I also take full responsibility for this result. We always aim to finish the match with a win, but unfortunately, luck was not on IFC's side today," he said.

Sabah FC head coach Jean-Paul de Marigny said his players began slowly in the first half before responding more aggressively after the break.

"We started a bit slow, the players weren't aggressive enough and lacked courage on the ball, but credit to them for fighting back and performing much better in the second half. That's the kind of football and mentality we want to see," he said. – Bernama

# Fifa Asean Cup real boost to football: Infantino

BY **KIRTINEE RAMESH** AND **HARITH KAMAL**
*newsdesk@thesundaily.com*

**THE** Federation Internationale de Football Association (Fifa) and Asean on Sunday signed a renewed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost regional cooperation in football development, culminating in the announcement of a new Fifa Asean Cup.

The MoU was signed by Fifa President Gianni Infantino and Asean secretary-general Dr Kao Kim Hourn, and witnessed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre.

Infantino said the agreement marked a new chapter for football in Southeast Asia, with all 11 Asean member countries – now including Timor-Leste – joining the initiative.

"A great honour it is for me to be here in this beautiful country of Malaysia, here in Asean, in the company of the Sports and Youth Minister," Infantino said.

"It was also an honour to have been received yesterday by the Prime Minister, and today, to sign this new MoU."

He said the partnership would focus on three main pillars – integrity, safety, and education – to develop football at all levels across the region.

"The first is integrity – integrity in the game. The second is ensuring a safe and secure environment for football.

"And the third is education – education through football, education in football development for girls and boys, women and men, across the whole region," he said.

Infantino announced that the new Fifa Asean Cup would be organised jointly with Asean governments and football associations.

"We are launching this competition to give a real boost to football. To feature the best players within Fifa's international match calendar – and to make it truly impactful in the region and shine across the entire world," he said.

"Football unites the world. We are uniting the world together with all 11 Asean countries. We are uniting nations, creating the Fifa Asean Cup, and I am confident it will be a huge success for this region."

In his remarks, Anwar reaffirmed Asean's full commitment to supporting football as a unifying force for youth development and regional solidarity.

"Asean leaders are totally committed to supporting football - the people's game, the game of the youth, and one of the world's most popular sports," he said.

Anwar said Asean's cooperation with Fifa would help ensure young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds, have equal access to sporting opportunities.

"We have the experience, and we want to share it with the young - particularly those from the poorer segments of our population, the urban youth, and those in rural and heartland areas.

"So that they too can receive the same encouragement, opportunities, and support," he said.



Fifa President Gianni Infantino. – *REUTERSPIC*

## BRIEFS

### EX-CJ to lead heritage players' probe

**THE** Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) has appointed former Chief Justice Tun Md Raus Sharif as the chairman of an independent committee to investigate documentation issues involving seven Harimau Malaya heritage players who were sanctioned by world governing body Fifa. In a statement yesterday, FAM reiterated its stand that no individual from within the association would be involved in the investigation to ensure that the process is carried out fairly, transparently and professionally. It said Md Raus has also been given the mandate to select the members of the independent committee. "Based on his credibility and extensive experience, FAM hopes that Md Raus, together with the committee members he will appoint, will be able to conduct a thorough investigation," the statement read.

### Full house at Malaysia GP

**THE** Malaysian Motorcycle Grand Prix (Malaysia GP) 2025, which concluded on Sunday, recorded an increase in attendance, drawing more than 195,000 spectators over the race weekend. Sepang International Circuit (SIC) chief executive officer Azhan Shafriman Hanif said the figure marks an increase compared to last year, despite this year's event coinciding with the Asean Summit. "Although we did not reach the target of 200,000 spectators, we are grateful for the encouraging turnout. Many still attended despite road closures in place for the Asean Summit. We observed that the grandstand seats were packed with spectators cheering for all the riders throughout the championship," he said, adding that the higher attendance also contributed to a significant increase in ticket sales. "Ticket sales have increased this year compared to last year. However, there is still room for improvement, particularly in terms of ticket sales strategy for next year. A 'buy one, free one' promotion was also introduced from the first day, and although the total revenue has yet to be finalised, current trends indicate a positive increase compared to the previous year," he said.

### 'Near-perfect' Marquez

**BK8** Gresini Racing MotoGP rider Alex Marquez believes he pulled off a "near perfect race", following some early setbacks during a challenging weekend, to romp to victory in the 2025 Malaysian MotoGP at the Sepang International Circuit (SIC) on Sunday. Spaniard Marquez admitted that early crashes during Friday's practice session almost derailed his rhythm and confidence. "I mean it's true that I made a mistake this weekend, you know, expecting things to be too easy and later on when you start the weekend with a crash already in Free Practice 1, (and) again a crash in the practice, it was quite complicated. During the weekend, we turned things around in quite a good way. So, today the plan was clear. We improved a little bit the feeling on the warm-up and later on I was clever on the plan to attack Pecco (Bagnaia) in the second lap and then just try to manage the tyres until the end," he said.

SCAN ME

theSun Sports

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Man City manager Pep Guardiola reacts. – *REUTERSPIC*

# 'Too early to worry'

## *Guardiola not concerned City have to chase down Arsenal*

BY **JONATHAN VEAL**

**MANCHESTER CITY** boss Pep Guardiola says it is too early to be worried about chasing Arsenal at the top of the Premier League.

City slipped to a 1-0 defeat at Aston Villa on Sunday as the Gunners beat Crystal Palace by the same scoreline to move six points clear at the top of the table.

Guardiola's side have history of chasing down Arsenal in the title race, memorably overhauling them in the 2023-24 season, and look set to have to do it again if they want to get their hands on the trophy.

But the City boss is not getting too worried just yet.

"Arsenal have been solid for many years, this time the concern is how we can improve, better, better, better and to be close," he said after a third successive loss at Villa Park.

"From my experience it (the season) is so long. So long. This is my experience. There are many teams there.

"I was worried before the international break (September) when we were 14th in the table.

"If they win all their games and win the Premier League, congratulate them, that's all we can do.

"But I have to feel the team is alive, the team is good. I don't know how many teams can come here and play the way we played, with the courage, possession and chances.

"We have to be stable with that. And after that, to deal with games better.

"But I don't live in October and November thinking, 'Oh what is going to happen if we don't win the Premier League,' so it's game by game now."

Villa celebrated Unai Emery's three-year anniversary in style as Matty Cash's first-half fizzer gave was enough for them a fourth successive Premier League win.

City were stifled excellently by a perfect Villa gameplan and Erling Haaland was stopped from scoring for just the second time this season in all competitions, ending a 12-game spree for club and country.

The Norwegian thought he had levelled at the end but it was ruled offside as he collided with the post.

Guardiola added: "I didn't speak with him. He got a knock into the post, right, I didn't speak to him."

In a week where Haaland launched his *YouTube* channel and revealed his love for raw milk, the Norwegian and his teammates went back to the Etihad with a sour taste in their mouths.

"We haven't scored a lot of goals this season and we have to make a step up," admitted Guardiola.

"Today it is difficult because they defended really well. We were there, we were close. In the games we won we were not so productive.

"It is a Champions League team, unfortunately for them they are not there, but they are a top top team for many years and will compete very well. They are in a good way.

"In general, I don't have many complaints. Little details but in general good."

Captain Bernardo Silva felt the side had created chances, but was particularly critical of the team's efforts defensively, saying the pressing was "really bad" and players arrived "two seconds late to every duel".

But he also said it was too early to draw conclusions.

"There is still a long way to go. I don't want to make hasty conclusions for now. We really want to be at the top of the table, but we're not there yet."

Such a run of results against Guardiola's side would not have seemed possible for Villa before Emery arrived at Villa Park in October 2022, transforming their fortunes.

And after a slow start to the campaign, they again look like challenging at the top end of the Premier League.

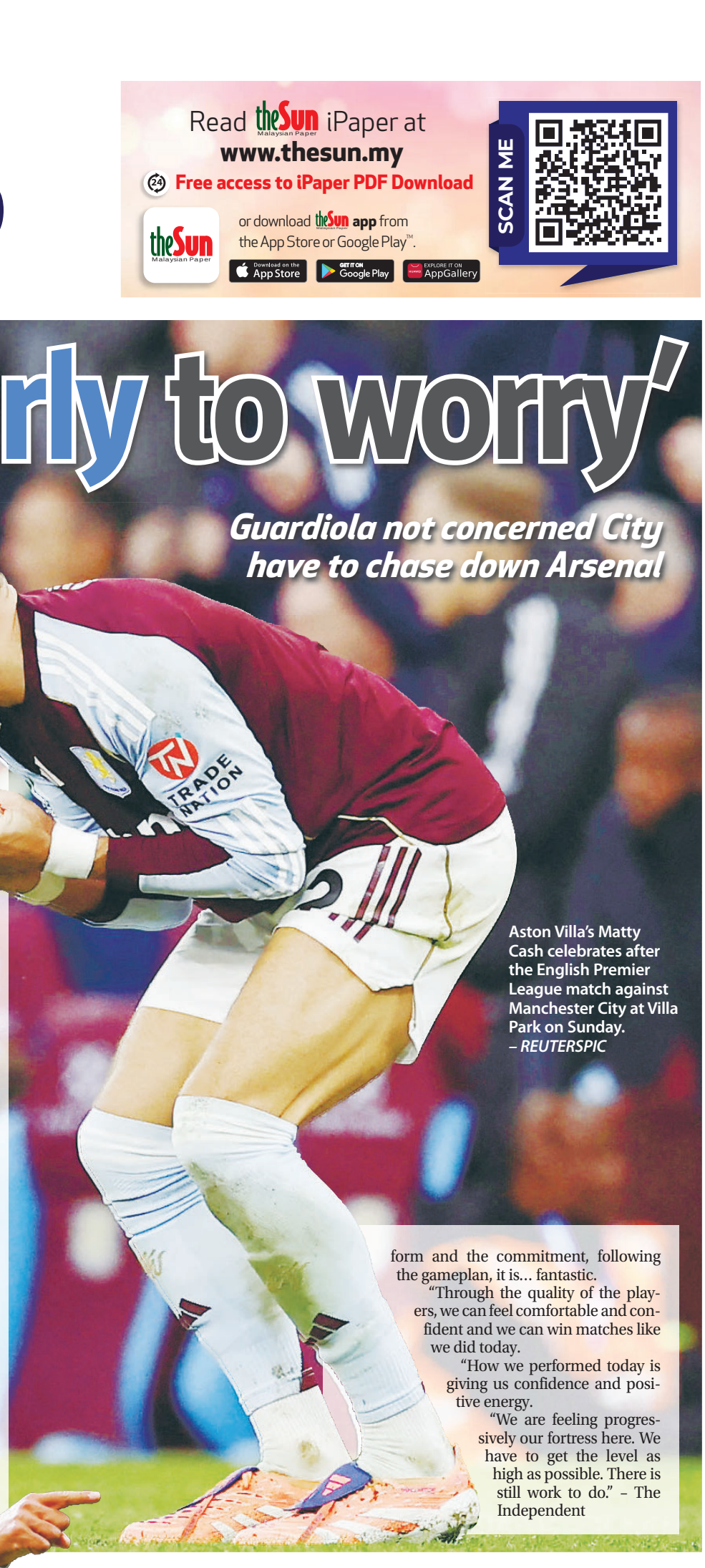
"We started the season pretty poorly and we had doubts, we were not feeling good or confident for different circumstances," Emery said.

"And especially this week against Tottenham away and Manchester City and how they perform and the commitment, following the gameplan, it is... fantastic.

"Through the quality of the players, we can feel comfortable and confident and we can win matches like we did today.

"How we performed today is giving us confidence and positive energy.

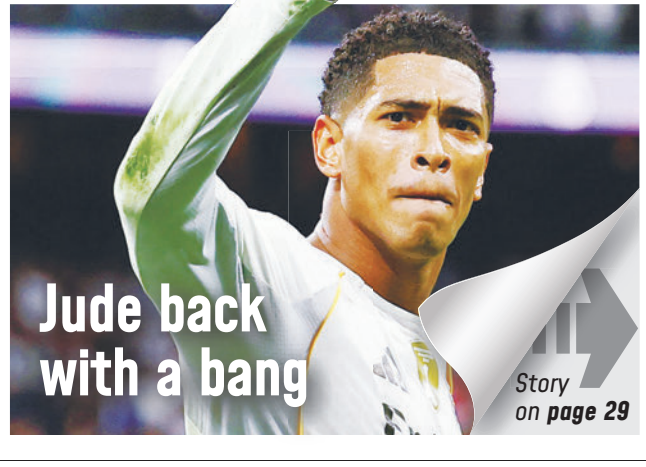
"We are feeling progressively our fortress here. We have to get the level as high as possible. There is still work to do." – The Independent



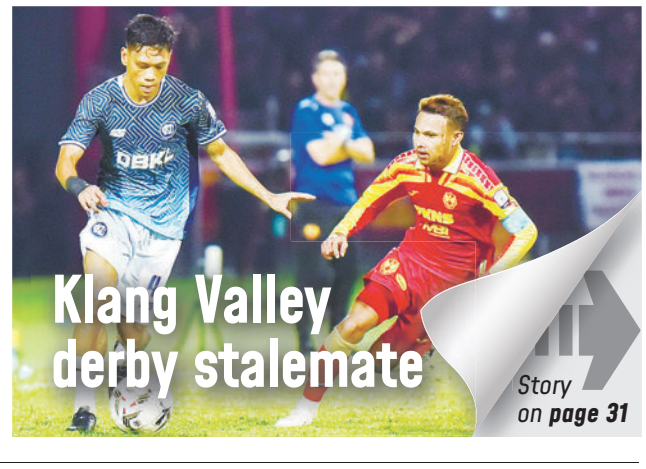
Aston Villa's Matty Cash celebrates after the English Premier League match against Manchester City at Villa Park on Sunday. – *REUTERSPIC*



'I can't stop laughing'
Story on **page 28**



Jude back with a bang
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