

RM1



15-month jail term for son of Al-Arqam founder, GISBH CEO

Duo among 13 men imprisoned while nine women fined RM4,500 each for being members of unlawful organisation.

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'Malaysia not ready yet for MediSave-style healthcare policy'

Model used in Singapore that requires compulsory wage deductions could drastically impact B40 group, say experts.

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E-hailing group lauds Budi95 initiative but laments low fares

While subsidised petrol helps cut costs, oversupply of drivers and platform algorithms remain major bane: Association

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Questions have also been raised on whether teachers would have sufficient time to prepare themselves for the new approach.
- AI GENERATED IMAGE BY SYED AZAHAR SYED OSMAN/THE SUN

Doubts on new teaching move

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While acknowledging some positives in proposed implementation of 'Alam dan Manusia' for primary school pupils, parents express concern that merging subjects with vastly different learning objectives may dilute foundational understanding.



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Sultan Ibrahim with King Hamad during the welcoming ceremony held at Sakhir Palace. – PIC COURTESY OF SULTAN IBRAHIM SULTAN ISKANDAR FACEBOOK PAGE

King accorded state welcome in Bahrain

MANAMA (BAHRAIN): His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim was accorded a state welcome here in conjunction with his three-day state visit.

Upon arrival at Sakhir Palace, Sultan Ibrahim and His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa of Bahrain were greeted by students waving Malaysian and Bahraini flags.

Their Majesties then witnessed the *Ardah*, a traditional Bahraini welcoming performance, before being escorted to the Podium of Honour accompanied by a 21-gun salute.

Joining Their Majesties at the podium were their sons – Tunku Temenggong Johor Tunku Idris Iskandar Al-Haj, Tunku Panglima Johor Tunku Abdul Rahman Al-Haj, Tunku Putera Johor Tunku Abu Bakar Al-Haj, and Crown Prince Salman Hamad Al Khalifa, who is also the prime minister of Bahrain.

The national anthems of both countries were then played after which Their Majesties proceeded to the Red Brief Council Room for an official meeting.

Following the meeting, Sultan Ibrahim departed for the Martyrs' Memorial Monument, a site of great significance in Bahrain's history.

Upon arrival, His Majesty was escorted to the royal podium before proceeding to the monument. An official then read *Surah al-Fatihah*, followed by a prayer.

The King proceeded to a palm tree near the monument and performed the symbolic pouring of water, which signified the conclusion of the ceremony.

The state visit, which began on Thursday, is the sixth undertaken by Sultan Ibrahim following visits to Singapore, China, Brunei, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

Bahrain remains one of Malaysia's key trading partners in Western Asia and is Malaysia's ninth-largest trading partner, 11th-largest export destination and eighth-largest import source among West Asian countries.

Meanwhile, His Majesty expressed gratitude for a smooth four-day state visit to Saudi Arabia that began on Monday.

"I greatly appreciate the meaningful and friendly conversation with Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (crown prince and prime minister of Saudi Arabia), which reaffirmed our desire to continue strengthening the successes we have achieved together over the years.

"The knowledge, spirit and vision of Prince Mohammed in transforming Saudi Arabia under Vision 2030 are quite inspiring to me," His Majesty said in a post on the Sultan Ibrahim Sultan Iskandar official Facebook page. – Bernama

Queen graces exhibition

PUTRAJAYA: Her Majesty the Queen of Malaysia Raja Zarith Sofiah yesterday graced the "1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacies of Muslim Civilisation" exhibition, which is part of the five-day Putrajaya Festival of Ideas 2025.

Her Majesty was welcomed on arrival by Higher Education Deputy Minister Datuk Mustapha Sakmud at the Putrajaya International Convention Centre at 10.15am.

The Queen spent about an hour at the pavilion, which showcases the contributions of the Islamic world and other civilisations to the development of global science and technology.

Higher Education director-general Datuk Prof Dr Azlinda Azman said the Queen was impressed by the university's innovative approach in transforming book illustrations into an engaging exhibition.

"Her Majesty expressed hope that the exhibition would be held in Kuala Lumpur next year.

"The Queen also said she would source books and hand them to us, allowing us to hold such exhibitions on a larger scale in the future."

Azlinda said the pavilion, spanning 28 sqm, was transformed into an inspiring exhibition space that reflected the creativity and talent of students from six local higher education institutions, namely Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin, Universiti Sains Malaysia, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn and Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.

"Muslims in earlier times developed a variety of innovations in daily life. If these are not highlighted, others might replicate them and claim them as their own." – Bernama

Security for Sultan Nazrin tightened

IPOH: Security measures for Perak Ruler Sultan Nazrin Shah have been enhanced to ensure comprehensive protection following the assault on His Royal Highness during the state-level National Day celebration on Aug 31, said a palace official.

"We have tightened security, particularly during events involving His Royal Highness and other members of the royal family, especially when on a main stage," said the Orang Kaya Bendahara Seri Maharaja Jen (Rtd) Tan Sri Dr Mohd Zahidi Zainuddin, who is also Perak Palace Security Committee chairman.

He was speaking at a media conference at a state investiture in conjunction with Sultan Nazrin's 69th birthday celebration at the Perak Darul Ridzuan Building yesterday.

Mohd Zahidi said despite the incident, Sultan Nazrin has remained approachable by engaging warmly with people from all walks of life.

He said the public would not face any difficulty if they sought permission to approach or take photographs with His Royal Highness, especially during official events.

"If it is done in an orderly and proper manner, the Sultan of Perak will certainly not refuse requests for photographs.

"Moreover, if children ask to take photos with His Royal Highness or with the Raja Permaisuri of Perak, both of them have never declined such requests as they are very fond of children."

On Sept 8, a woman was charged in the Ipoh Magistrate's Court with using criminal force against Sultan Nazrin during the state-level National Day celebration. – Bernama

Parents express concern on new primary school subject

➤ 'Integrating multiple subjects with vastly different learning objectives may dilute foundational understanding'

BY FAIZ RUZMAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: While parents expect the upcoming "Alam dan Manusia" (World and Humanity) subject to encourage more meaningful learning in primary schools, they caution that its success would depend on how teachers are trained by the Education Ministry.

Three parents *theSun* spoke to welcomed the introduction of the subject but said its success hinges on preparation and transparency instead of just policy announcements.

Mother of a 13-year-old student, Malathy Arumugam, 49, expressed concern that integrating subjects with vastly different learning objectives may dilute foundational understanding.

"Science is a core subject that needs focus, proper explanation and time to understand. Students need experiments, observation and discussion to develop critical thinking.

"If it is joined together with art, music and

health, I worry the lessons would become too general and children won't get a deep understanding of any one subject."

Malathy also questioned whether schools would be prepared for co-teaching in practice.

"If two teachers have different teaching styles or methods, students might get confused. Coordinating this will require strong planning. Teachers must be trained not only to teach the new subject but also to work together effectively."

She said to support learning at home, parents need clearer communication from schools while tuition centres must also be briefed.

Malathy suggested reintroducing review practices such as requiring parents to sign exercise books so that families could monitor their children's progress more consistently.

Universiti Teknologi Mara senior lecturer Tengku Elena Tengku Mahamad, 39, a mother of three aged 12, six and three, welcomed the integrated concept but expressed concerns about its execution.

"I support the move because it encourages

children to understand the world holistically. Combining science, health, music and digital elements can nurture critical thinking.

"The effectiveness depends on how well teachers are trained. One year feels very short to prepare everyone for such a major shift. Training and support should continue even after 2027.

"We as parents would also need clear communication. We want to understand what our children are learning so that we can guide them. Parent guides, sample lesson outlines or short briefings would help."

For Asha Hasniny Mohd Hashim, 49, a mother of four, the integrated subject is not entirely new. She recalls studying the World and Humanity subject in primary school.

"It encourages experiential learning. Students remember what they do, see and explore. This helps them understand concepts more deeply rather than memorising facts.

"Teachers today already use cross-curricular elements. They facilitate learning. Training is helpful but real classroom application depends on time, workload and school priorities."

The subject will replace science, health education, visual arts and music for Year One pupils from 2027, combining these areas into a single learning framework delivered through team-teaching by two teachers to a class.

'Malaysia not ready for compulsory health savings'

➤ Concept risks burdening low income households, say experts

BY QIRANA NABILLA MOHD RASHIDI
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Experts have said the MediSave model may work in Singapore, but Malaysia is not there yet, adding that compulsory health deductions could hit poor communities the hardest.

MediSave is Singapore's national health savings scheme under the Central Provident Fund, in which individuals must set aside part of their monthly salary to cover hospital stays, selected outpatient treatments and health insurance premiums for themselves and their families.

Economist Prof Geoffrey Williams said introducing a compulsory health savings scheme would effectively amount to a new tax on Malaysians.

He added that Malaysians spend about RM30 billion annually on out-of-pocket medical costs, equivalent to RM1,000 per person or about RM83 per month.

"This is already a tax incidence of nearly 5% on minimum wage earners and 2.8% on those earning the median wage. A mandatory scheme would therefore be regressive."

He also said diverting funds from the Employees Provident Fund (EPF) for such purposes would also be risky, as many contributors are saving too little for retirement and EPF coverage extends to only about half of the population.

"How would 7.2 million people outside of the labour force with no regular income pay into such a scheme?"

"Low-income families tend to have more children and dependent parents, so to save into such a scheme would involve payments for multiple people. This would be a huge burden."

Williams proposed introducing a 1% e-payment tax as an alternative, which could raise about RM28.8 billion, enough to cover out-of-pocket health spending of Malaysians.

He added that this could also make basic healthcare free at the point of use, with private doctors recovering fees directly from the government.

UniKL Business School Islamic Finance associate professor Dr Aimi Zulhazmi Abdul Rashid said a MediSave-style scheme might not be suitable for Malaysia as medical treatment at

public hospitals remains highly subsidised, with most Malaysians paying minimal fees.

He said those who seek treatment at private healthcare facilities are usually covered by insurance or employer-provided medical benefits, reducing the need for a compulsory health savings account.

"Nonetheless, a MediSave-like model may align with the government's targeted subsidy approach, provided that healthcare benefits are managed efficiently."

He added that EPF savings should remain focused on retirement needs, especially as living costs continue to rise and the life expectancy of Malaysians increases due to healthier lifestyles and advances in medical treatment.

Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca) CEO Dr Saravanan Thambirajah said the concept of a compulsory health savings account may look attractive in theory, but it risks burdening low-income households in practice.

He said many Malaysians, especially those without fixed incomes, are not in a position to set aside a portion of their salary for medical expenses when basic needs take up most of their earnings.

"Healthcare is a fundamental human right, not a commodity. Any plan must ensure transparency, accessibility and affordability for all, not just those with stable incomes."

He added that while Singapore ensures

strong governance and digital systems, it still faces rising medical costs, showing that savings schemes alone cannot curb inflation.

"Malaysia and Singapore are not 'apple to apple'. Wage structures, tax bases, labour informality and social protection differ significantly."

"Without first addressing income adequacy, price regulation and coverage gaps, a compulsory savings model would be regressive in practice."

He also said the priority should not be introducing another deduction, but ensuring government-led measures to keep healthcare costs under control and guarantee universal access.

"Using EPF to pay premiums or medical bills is a red flag that healthcare has become expensive. It solves today's bill by creating tomorrow's poverty."

He said while EPF withdrawals could help keep insurance policies active during financial hardship, the long-term consequences such as reduced savings, lost growth and a higher risk of elderly poverty far outweigh the short-term relief.

"Fomca opposes using EPF to fund insurance premiums or routine healthcare. Retirement and healthcare are both pillars of social protection."

"One must not be funded at the expense of the other."



Williams proposed introducing a 1% e-payment tax as an alternative, which could raise about RM28.8 billion, enough to cover out-of-pocket health spending of Malaysians. — ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

'Strengthen existing social protection systems'

PETALING JAYA: Malaysians are questioning whether the country's system could handle a compulsory healthcare savings scheme.

Sivanisvarry Morhan, 26, a private sector worker, told *theSun* that she would not support a mandatory health savings scheme such as Singapore's MediSave at this stage.

"Given that about 2.9 million Malaysian households fall within the B40 group earning below RM4,850 a month, many are struggling to meet daily expenses."

"Adding another mandatory deduction for health savings would only increase the burden," she said, adding that it would be better to strengthen existing healthcare funding and social protection systems to make them more efficient and accessible.

She also said unlike Singapore's Central Provident Fund, which takes up to 37% of salaries, Malaysia's EPF contributions are lower and lack a separate health account.

"Since Malaysians can already use EPF for medical needs and earn less than Singaporeans, another mandatory deduction isn't necessary."

"The cost of living keeps going up, from groceries and rent to transport and childcare. Many people are just trying to make ends meet."

She said trust remains an issue, highlighting that while EPF has performed well, frequent policy changes and limited transparency make people cautious.

She added that any new scheme must have clear rules, open communication and strong accountability.

"To be honest, Malaysia's public healthcare is still below par. Long waits at government hospitals show how stretched the system is, despite staff doing their best."

"A mandatory health savings scheme will not solve this, it just adds pressure on those already struggling. The focus should be on improving quality and access first."

Puteri Aina Farhanis Megat Khas, 26, an auditor, said some Malaysians may not be able to afford another compulsory deduction as their income is just enough for daily needs.

She said it could become a short-term burden, forcing some to seek additional income if the amount is significant.

"While a mandatory health savings scheme offers potential advantages in ensuring long-term funding sustainability and promoting individual responsibility, the government should use a model that suits the country's economy and study the average level of income of Malaysians so that it is feasible."

She said she would not recommend using EPF savings for medical expenses before retirement, as its purpose is to ensure financial stability later in life.

She added that early withdrawals could severely affect people's income security after they retire. — By **Qirana Nabilla Mohd Rashidi**

Call to address issues affecting traditional villages

KUALA LUMPUR: The Federal Territories Department has been asked to pay immediate attention to issues affecting traditional villages in Kuala Lumpur, including those concerning foreign residents, infrastructure maintenance and land use status.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Federal Territories) Datuk Seri Dr Zaliha Mustafa said other issues that need attention include the situation of agricultural land that has been occupied with residential structures without approval.

She said the directive was issued while chairing the Meeting of Heads of Agencies under the Federal Territories Department at the FT Land and Mines Office on Thursday.

She added that the effort is in line with initiatives to strengthen land governance and ensure that development in the Federal Territories proceeds in an orderly manner based on data and is focused on community wellbeing.

She also said during the meeting that the Mobil e-Tanah app would be officially launched on Nov 11.

The purpose of the app is to streamline access to land information and services in the Federal Territory.

Zaliha added that agencies under the department also presented comprehensive updates on initiatives to enhance energy efficiency and asset management using new energy technologies in support of green building certification, and reduce government electricity cost, in line with the CHASE (Clean-Healthy-Advanced-Safe-Eco) City agenda. — Bernama

2,500 TVET places in China secured, says Zahid

SHANGHAI: Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said Malaysia has secured 2,500 new placements for Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programmes in China next year.

He said last year, 5,125 places were offered to Malaysian youths to undergo TVET training at leading institutions and industries in China.

"This increase was made following the success of previous programmes. These courses are short term, lasting between one and six months."

"Last year, we initially received 2,500 placements, but the number rose to 5,125. For this year, we also expect the number to increase to as many as 5,000," he told reporters after officiating at the 2nd Malaysia-China International Industry-TVET Education Cooperation Forum and the 4th Malaysia-China Vocational Education Fair yesterday.

Ahmad Zahid, who is also Rural and Regional Development minister and National TVET Council chairman, said the employability rate of Malaysian TVET graduates who undergo training in China is 100%.

He said Chinese companies investing in Malaysia have been committed to hiring China-trained graduates, while data shows that 54.7% of school leavers have shown strong interest in pursuing TVET fields.

He added that this development would also help reduce the country's dependence on foreign workers.

"I believe that within 15 years at the latest, *Insyaa-Allah*, we could minimise this dependence." — Bernama



Perak e-hailing drivers stalled by low fares

➤ Ipoh rates significantly lower compared with other major cities, says group

BY IKHWAN ZULKAFLEE
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Persatuan eHailing Perak president Neduchalian Vengadasalam said while the federal government's Budi95 petrol subsidy has been welcomed by the e-hailing community in the state, the real issue troubling drivers is not fuel costs but persistent low fares.

Neduchalian told *theSun* that following an internal discussion with members, a majority of the drivers agreed that the current monthly quota of 600 litres of subsidised Ron95 was adequate for active e-hailing operators in the state.

"Our members appreciate the government's Budi95 initiative and we acknowledge its positive impact on reducing operational costs. However, the bigger and more pressing issue is the low fare rates that have long plagued drivers in Ipoh."

According to findings by the group, fares in Ipoh are significantly lower compared with those in major cities such as Kuala Lumpur, Penang and Johor Bahru, although Neduchalian acknowledged that the situation could be caused by a combination of an oversupply of drivers and platform algorithms that suppress prices in low-demand areas.

"There are simply too many drivers chasing too few passengers. The platform's fare algorithm adjusts prices downwards, which directly cuts into the earnings of drivers. Even with petrol subsidies, the take-home income continues to drop."

Data and feedback from members show that the effect of low fares is far more damaging to the livelihood of drivers than fluctuations in fuel costs.

The group, which is also an associate member of Gabungan eHailing Malaysia, calculated that while an additional 200 litres of subsidised petrol at a 60 sen discount per litre would save a driver about RM120 a month, the loss in income due to low fares could easily reach RM200 to RM300 monthly.

"That is why we believe the debate should not focus solely on fuel subsidies. What we need is a fairer fare system that reflects the real cost of living and operating

expenses in smaller cities such as Ipoh."

He said the situation in Perak differs from the Klang Valley, where higher trip volumes and demand help stabilise the incomes of drivers despite similar fare structures.

In contrast, drivers in medium-sized towns often face longer waiting times between trips and fewer high-fare journeys.

"The current system fails to account for regional differences.

"E-hailing drivers outside major urban centres are bearing the brunt of an unbalanced algorithm that rewards high-density areas while penalising smaller markets."

The group is urging the Transport Ministry and related agencies to carry out a national fare structure review, including the establishment of a minimum base fare that aligns with local operating costs and living standards.

"We are not asking for special treatment. We simply want a transparent and fair pricing mechanism that allows drivers to earn a sustainable income."

In addition to fare reform, the association is calling for a dedicated engagement session between the government, e-hailing platforms and driver representatives from smaller cities. It believes this would ensure that policy adjustments are grounded in

accurate field data rather than assumptions made from the Klang Valley perspective.

"When policies are designed with local realities in mind, everyone benefits, including drivers, passengers and the platforms.

"If fares remain unsustainably low, no amount of subsidy would solve the underlying problem."

He also said the long-term wellbeing of e-hailing drivers depends not just on cost reduction measures such as fuel subsidies but also on income stability and fairness in the ecosystem.

"We truly appreciate the government's attention through Budi95, but let's not lose sight of what really matters - ensuring that drivers make a decent living from honest work."

On Nov 4, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim announced an expansion of the Ron95 petrol subsidy quota for active e-hailing and airport taxi drivers.

Under the revised scheme, drivers who travel less than 2,000km per month will maintain the base allocation of 300 litres every month, while those covering between 2,000 and 5,000km will qualify for 600 litres.

Drivers who exceed 5,000km monthly will now be eligible for up to 800 litres of subsidised fuel.



Neduchalian said the wellbeing of e-hailing drivers depends not just on cost reduction measures, but also on income stability and fairness in the ecosystem. - ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THESUN

N. Sembilan committed to quality housing

SEREMBAN: Negeri Sembilan Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Aminuddin Harun said the state government remains committed to ensuring every citizen has access to comfortable, quality and affordable housing, in line with its mission to enhance social wellbeing and community development.

He said various initiatives have been introduced to strengthen the housing sector and provide safe, conducive homes for the public.

"We always support efforts to develop housing that elevates the standard of living of the (public) while balancing progress with environmental sustainability, such as the Iris@Enstek Heights project in Taman Bukit Enstek, developed by New Times Development and Yayasan Negeri Sembilan.

"Efforts to develop high-impact housing also require close collaboration with various government and private agencies to accelerate project implementation," he said at the launch of the housing project, expected to be completed in 2028, yesterday.

He added that the state government is also prioritising housing projects in strategic locations with access to employment centres, public facilities and efficient transport.

He also said as of January 2024, the state government approved a total of 33,697 affordable housing units, comprising 10,379 Type A, 11,493 Type B and 11,825 Type C units.

"We are also providing interest-free loans for the underprivileged to build houses on their own land. The price per unit is about RM85,000 under the Rumah Harapan Rakyat Negeri Sembilan Programme, which has been in place since 2021." - Bernama

Business park helps spur local economy

SUNGAI PETANI: Since its launch in October last year, Laman Niaga Sekupang D' Wisma Ria has become one of the latest attractions in Sungai Petani, boosting local economic growth.

Town municipal council president Tunku Iskandar Shah Tunku Muszaffar Shah said traders at the business park are charged a rental fee of as low as 10 sen per site.

"The number of visitors has reached 300 a day and daily sales have gone up by between RM200 to RM400.

"(The council) is also planning to open two more Laman Sekupang sites this December, in Bandar Puteri Jaya and Bandar Laguna Merbok."

Trader Noor Azlina Abd Kader, 44, said the low rental has helped vendors continue running their businesses in the designated areas.

"It's a good initiative that draws more visitors here. Sales have gone up too, and there are plenty of food choices here."

Ahmad Abdullah, 72, said the token rental amount has been a great help to traders coping with the rising cost of living.

"I've never seen a rental as low as this. I hope it continues because it really helps ease the burden on traders." - Bernama

Initiative offering free ambulance services launched

SHAH ALAM: The Selangor government has launched the "Ambulans Kita Selangor" initiative, a free health mobility service aimed at improving emergency response and supporting low-income residents under five local authorities in the state.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Amirudin Shari said 48 ambulances will be deployed under the programme, supported by a RM1 million allocation to ensure faster and more convenient access to emergency and health services for those in need.

He said the initiative is part of the state's proactive measures to address delays in ambulance response times through a strategic

collaboration with St John Ambulans Malaysia Selangor, which serves as the main implementation partner.

"For the initial phase, the programme will be introduced in the districts of Petaling, Kuala Langat and Kuala Selangor, covering five local authorities and 26 state constituencies from Ijok to Sungai Pelek.

"This initiative is part of our efforts to ensure health mobility services reach the people quickly and efficiently, with the best possible quality of care," he said after officiating at the programme launch at the Selangor State Secretary building yesterday.

The five local authorities involved are the

Shah Alam City Council, Petaling Jaya City Council, Subang Jaya City Council, Kuala Langat Municipal Council and the Kuala Selangor Municipal Council.

Amirudin said the programme provides free one-way or round-trip ambulance transport between the home of patients and public health facilities, easing the burden of those who cannot afford transportation to hospitals for follow-up treatment or medical appointments.

He said the service specifically targets households earning RM5,000 and below per month, bedridden patients and those who require medical support such as administration of oxygen during transit.

"Apart from reducing the workload at public healthcare facilities, the initiative also helps lower the financial strain on eligible groups. Private ambulance services could cost between RM350 and RM600 per trip."

He added that the 48 ambulances will operate on a trial basis until November 2026, after which the state government would assess the potential to expand the programme to six additional districts.

He previously announced the programme during the tabling of the Selangor Budget 2025, describing it as one of the commitments under the "5 Tekad 5 Tahun" manifesto for the 2023 state election. - Bernama

13 jailed, nine fined for being members of GISBH

► Son of Al-Arqam founder among those sentenced to 15 months' imprisonment after pleading guilty

KAJANG: The Shah Alam High Court yesterday sentenced GISB Holdings Sdn Bhd (GISBH) CEO Nasiruddin Mohd Ali, the son of former Al-Arqam founder Ashaari Muhammad, Mohammad Adib At-Tamimi and 11 other men to 15 months' imprisonment each for being members of an unlawful organisation.

Apart from Nasiruddin, 66, and Mohammad Adib, 33, the other men are Mohd Shukri Mohd Noor, 54, Muhammad Afdaluddin Latif, 35, Mohamad Sayuti Omar, 36, Mohd Fazil Md Jasin, 58, Mohd Dhirar Fakhur Razi, 35, Mokhtar Tajuddin, 61, Muhammad Fajrul Islam Khalid, 29, Abu Ubaidah Ahmad Shukri, 35, Shuhaimi Mohamed, 57, Hasnan Abd Hamid, 54, and Muhammad Zahid Azhar@Nadzri, 52.

Judge Datuk Seri Latifah Mohd Tahar handed down the sentences during a proceeding at the Kajang Prison Complex after all 13 men pleaded guilty to the charge.

They were ordered to serve their jail terms from the date of arrest, which was between

Sept 2 and Oct 12, 2024.

Meanwhile, Nasiruddin's wife Azura Md Yusof, 58, and eight other women were each fined RM4,500, in default seven months' imprisonment, after pleading guilty to the same charge.

The eight women are Khalilatul-Zalifah Mohammad Jamil, 28, Nur Jannah Omar, 33, Hamimah Yakub, 72, Asmat@Asmanira Muhammad Ramly, 45, Nurul Jannah Idris, 29, Siti Salmiah Ismail, 58, Siti Hajar Ismail, 52 and Mahani Kasim, 55.

They were initially charged under Section 130V(1) of the Penal Code for being members of an organised criminal group, which carries a minimum of five years and up to 20 years' imprisonment upon conviction.

However, following representations from the defence, the Attorney-General's Chambers offered an alternative charge of being members of an unlawful organisation, Bernama reported.

They were charged with committing the offence at a premises in Bandar Country Homes, Rawang, between October 2020 and Sept 11, 2024.

The charge, framed under Section 43 of the Societies Act 1966 (Act 335), carries a maximum penalty of three years' imprisonment, a fine of up to RM5,000, or both.

Before delivering the sentence, the judge said the court had considered the guilty pleas of all the accused to the alternative charge after hearing the prosecution's aggravating

submissions and mitigation pleas by the defence.

For the female accused, she said the court also took into account their guilty pleas and the period they spent in remand – about six months – before being granted bail.

Earlier, DPP Shafiq Hasim urged the court to impose a deterrent and proportionate sentence, stressing that the offences were serious and had implications for social stability and national security.

"As all the accused are mature adults who understand the difference between right and wrong, their guilty pleas should not be the main factor in reducing the sentence.

"Therefore, the prosecution is seeking imprisonment for all the accused," said Shafiq, who undertook the case with DPPs Mohammad Fakhurrazi Ahmad Salim and Norinna Bahadun.

Lawyer Datuk Rosli Kamaruddin, representing all the accused, appealed for the minimum sentence and asked that the nine female accused be fined instead.

"The male accused have been in custody since around September 2024, serving one year, one month and 20 days. The female accused were remanded for six months before being granted bail.

"All the accused have repented and expressed regret for their actions, which deviated from the teachings of *Ahli Sunnah Wal Jamaah*," he said.

700,000kg minerals worth RM2.5m seized

IPOH: Silico Manganese minerals weighing 700,000kg estimated to be worth about RM2.54 million were seized during an integrated enforcement operation by the Khazanah Integrated Intra-Agency Operation at a private jetty in Segari, Lumut, near Manjung.

General Operations Force (GOF) Ulu Kinta Northern Brigade commander SAC Shahrum Hashim said during the operation, which ran from 11am to 6pm on Thursday, a large quantity of the minerals was discovered stored at the private jetty area belonging to Sungai Dinding's Enterprise Sdn Bhd in Jalan Cempaka Segari, Lumut.

He said the minerals are believed to have been stored there for more than a week without approval from the Perak Department of Minerals and Geoscience.

"Initial inspection of the jetty area found 250 jumbo sacks, each believed to contain 1,000kg of Silico Manganese, with an estimated total weight of 250,000kg. Further inspection at a nearby warehouse uncovered another 450 jumbo sacks, also weighing 1,000kg each, bringing the total to 700,000kg," he said in a statement.

Shahrum added that initial investigations indicated that the minerals were imported from India and intended for export to Myanmar for use in the iron-making industry, with Malaysia serving as a temporary transit hub before being shipped out via waterway.

A 45-year-old local man was arrested during the operation, which involved the GOF, officers from the Perak Land and Mines Office, the Perak Mineral and Geoscience Department and the Criminal Investigation Division of the Manjung district police headquarters.

"The case is being investigated under Regulation 6(1)(a) of the Mineral Development (Effluent) Regulations 2016, which carries a fine of up to RM100,000 or imprisonment of up to five years, or both," he said.

Shahrum added that patrols and surveillance would continue across Perak, Kedah, Penang and Perlis to curb criminal activities related to offences under Khazanah Integrated Op. – Bernama



An aerial view of the affected area. – BERNAMAPIC

Bush fire in Balakong extinguished after five hours

KUALA LUMPUR: A bush fire in a hilly area of Taman Seri Timah in Balakong was fully extinguished early yesterday morning after more than five hours of firefighting operations by the Selangor Fire and Rescue Department.

Its assistant director (operations) Ahmad Mukhlis Mukhtar said firefighters managed to bring the blaze under control at about 9pm before fully extinguishing it at 12.15am.

He said the fire involved an area atop a hill covering about 2.4ha, double the initial estimate of 1.2ha.

"The department received an emergency call

about the incident at 7.02pm on Thursday and the operation concluded at 12.15am yesterday. No casualties were reported," he said in a statement.

Ahmad Mukhlis said the operation involved 27 personnel from the Bandar Tun Hussein Onn, Seri Kembangan, Pandan Indah, Sungai Besi and Cheras fire and rescue stations, with senior fire officer I Roduan Sudin acting as the operations commander.

Two senior officers, assistant fire chiefs Mohd Akmal Mohd Hairi and Mohd Hafis Hamdany were also present to coordinate actions on the ground.

A total of six vehicles were deployed in the operation, comprising a Fire Rescue Tender (FRT) from Bandar Tun Hussein Onn, one FRT and one Emergency Medical Rescue Services unit from Seri Kembangan, a water tanker each from Pandan Indah and Cheras, and an FRT from Sungai Besi.

Ahmad Mukhlis said two volunteer fire brigades from Balakong with six members and one four-wheel drive vehicle, and another from Serdang with four members and one First Response Vehicle, also assisted in the operation. – Bernama

Rela reminds public to respect officers on duty

JOHOR BAHRU: The People's Volunteer Corps (Rela) has reminded the public to respect all civil servants carrying out their duties in the field, including Rela personnel.

In a statement, the department said each member is a civil servant performing official duties under the jurisdiction of the relevant authority.

"Therefore, any action to obstruct, threaten or scold them while on duty can be investigated under prevailing laws," it said.

The reminder follows an incident involving one of its members who was rudely reprimanded by a man at the Johor Bahru Sentral Bus Terminal in Sultan Iskandar Building recently.

Rela said the incident, which occurred on Nov 4, took place while its personnel were assisting in managing public movement and ensuring safety in the terminal area.

It said the Rela member was scolded by an individual who was dissatisfied after being asked to follow a designated route to board a bus.

The department expressed appreciation to the officer involved for remaining calm and professional during the confrontation.

"To maintain and improve the quality of service in the field, continuous training and guidance will continue to be provided to all members," it said.

On Thursday, police confirmed they had arrested a 31-year-old man in connection with the incident.

Earlier, a 58-second video was posted on social media showing a man shouting at a Rela member, believed to be an elderly person, who was giving instructions while on duty.

The video also showed a woman attempting to calm the man, drawing widespread sympathy online for the Rela officer involved. – Bernama



Excavation work has reached a depth of about three metres, with more artefacts and historical discoveries expected if exploration continues.
— BERNAMAPIC

Excavation on Pulau Melaka extended after major find

➤ Discovery of ship fragments and coins points to rich maritime history of Malacca Sultanate

MALACCA: The archaeological excavation on Pulau Melaka, that just completed its fourth phase, will continue in efforts to uncover and recover artefacts from the site, said National Heritage Department director-general Mohamad Muda Bahadin.

He said excavation work for this phase, which began on Oct 24 and ended on Nov 2, has been extended following the discovery of artefacts, including wooden fragments believed to be part of a ship from the Malacca Malay Sultanate, as well as porcelain and coins from the era of Sultan Mahmud Shah.

Mohamad Muda said the current excavation has covered only a 12m X 12m site

but the area is expected to expand based on ongoing studies.

"We will continue this project until it is completed. It may take two to three years or even longer depending on future studies.

"For this fourth phase, 24 personnel comprising members of the department, the Melaka Museum Corporation, archaeology and history experts from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia and Universiti Malaysia Terengganu, as well as a group of volunteers, are involved in the project," he said when met at the excavation site yesterday.

Excavation work has reached a depth of about three metres, with more artefacts and historical discoveries expected if exploration continues.

"For instance, the excavation depth could extend to between 10m and 20m if it involves a large ship with an extensive structure, possibly still partially embedded in the former seabed at the site," he said.

Mohamad Muda added that scientific studies involving local and foreign experts, including historians, archaeologists and

Malay shipbuilding specialists, would be carried out to verify the findings.

"For example, samples of wood believed to be from the ship's hull will be sent to the Beta Analytic laboratory in the US for dating tests and to the Forest Research Institute Malaysia for wood species analysis.

"In addition, conservation work on the ship's wooden hull has begun, including a desalination process as an initial treatment to prevent damage," he said.

He added that the discoveries would also be discussed at a special conference involving relevant experts to validate the findings before being entered into the historical record, particularly for Malacca, Bernama reported.

Records show that excavation work on Pulau Melaka has been carried out by the department in stages since 2021, uncovering various historical artefacts linked to the Malacca Malay Sultanate as well as Portuguese and Dutch colonisation, including pottery and porcelain fragments, coins and pieces of wood believed to be part of a sunken merchant ship.

Exhibition on Asean traditional textiles, costumes and weaving

KUALA LUMPUR: A total of 105 items featuring traditional textiles, woven materials, weaving tools and regional costumes are on display at the Fabrics of Asean: The Eternity of Weaving exhibition at the National Museum from Oct 20 to Dec 31.

The exhibition, held at Gallery 2 of the National Museum, is organised by the National Unity Ministry through the Department of Museums in conjunction with Malaysia's Asean Chairmanship.

National Unity Minister Datuk Aaron Ago Dagang said the exhibition not only showcases the beauty of regional artistry and craftsmanship but also reflects Asean's role in promoting cultural heritage diplomacy.

"Featuring collections from all 10 Asean member states, the exhibition illustrates how art, history and tradition serve as bridges between nations. Through fabrics, we do not merely weave patterns but weave trust, friendship and mutual respect.

"This weaving art, handed down from our ancestors, has now become a valuable collection preserved by artisans and collectors. We are targeting 20,000 visitors, and admission is free," he said after the opening ceremony recently.

The exhibition features four main segments that take visitors through Asean's textile heritage, fabric-making processes, the beauty of traditional motifs and the challenges of preserving the art of weaving in the modern age.

In her officiating speech, the Prime Minister's wife Datuk Seri Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail said the exhibition not only highlights the beauty of Asean's textile heritage but also embodies the spirit of unity and brotherhood shared across the region.

"I am confident that this spirit of cooperation will further strengthen our cultural ties and foster a deeper sense of unity among our nations, turning simple threads into stories that live through generations.

"These fabrics of woven histories... each piece blends creativity and identity to create a dialogue between tradition and innovation. More than just cloth, they are tangible links from a weaver's hands to the heart of the community and to those who collect them," she said.

The event was enlivened by a fashion showcase curated by designer Zachrin Jaafars, featuring the beauty of traditional Asean collections.

Wan Azizah also presented certificates of appreciation to collectors in recognition of their contributions to the exhibition. — Bernama

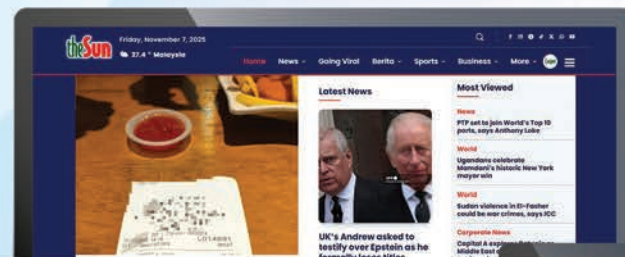
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P. CHANDRA SAGARAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

IPOH: The Ipoh City Council's strategic partner for the circular economy has placed 35 clothing recycle bins to help facilitate environmental sustainability among the people of the city.

The bins have been positioned by Life Line Clothing Malaysia Sdn. Bhd. at nine different points, including Shell petrol stations, shopping malls like Aeon Mall, a TF Value Mart outlet, Mydin Supermarket, residential areas and schools.

The initiative is part of the Local Agenda 21 2025 programme.

It involves efforts to implement actions related to the circular economy, with the theme "Waste to Wealth," so as to spur the local economy as well as encourage the public to re-recycle waste which could be exchanged ("Trash for Cash").

City Mayor Zamakhshari Hanipah recently officiated at the installation of one such bin at the Shell station along Jalan Hospital.

"From June to October 2025 a total of 52,822 kg of used textiles were recycled with strategic cooperation of various parties, which is an encouraging achievement," he said.

"The circular economy programme implemented by the council in 2021 initially involved business premises, housing estates, schools, industrial areas and institutions of higher of learning in phases .

"Today the initiative has been extended to operators of Shell petrol stations and it is hoped that other oil companies would follow suit."

The company is the fifth strategic partner for the programme. The others are Edsha Solution Sdn Bhd (for e-waste), Biovisma Sdn Bhd (used cooking oil), TetraPak (M) Sdn Bhd (packet drinks) and Thowlee Recycle Sdn Bhd (used tyres).

Zamakhshari stressed that the the council has spent RM30 million for solid waste disposal.

The latest initiative is expected to spur the



Zamakhshari (third from right) officiating at the opening of the public bin. – P. CHANDRA SAGARAN/THESUN

Recycling used clothes for sustainable community

➤ Nearly 53,000kg of textiles donated in five months

community to achieve the objective of a having a "Smart and Prosperous City" as per the Perak Sejahtera 2030 vision.

Also present at the event were Life Line Clothing Malaysia CEO Dale Warren, the

council's secretary Ahmad Munir Ishak, councillors and heads of departments.

Lending a glamorous and meaningful touch to the occasion was Mrs Earth Malaysia 2025 Mandy Gondaara.

On hand to receive them were Shell Malaysia Trading Sdn Bhd accounts manager (for government departments) Rukiah Rahman, the station's Petromart manager Bahakhi Mohammad.

Lahad Datu police strengthen bonds with public

BY JOSHUA CHANG
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

KOTA KINABALU: In a proactive move to enhance public trust and collaboration, the Lahad Datu district police headquarters organised a "Meet Clients Day" at the Mutiara Kasih People's Housing Programme (PPR) site.

The event was held on November 1 with the theme "We Listen, We Act", and officiated by district police chief ACP Dzulbaharin Ismail.

This initiative is a cornerstone of the Royal Malaysian Police's ongoing community policing strategy, designed to foster a stronger, more cooperative relationship with people.

The programme featured a range of activities aimed at facilitating direct engagement between the police and the community.

Key highlights included an open dialogue session where residents could voice their concerns directly to police personnel.

To provide immediate assistance, special counters were set up for customer service, traffic summons inquiries, and the Amanita initiative which promotes the Volunteer Smartphone Patrol app and community complaint QR codes.

Further strengthening their crime prevention efforts, the police conducted public awareness talks on current safety issues, led by officers from the District Narcotics Crime Investigation Division and Commercial Crime Investigation Division.

Informational exhibitions and the distribution of educational leaflets complemented these talks, providing residents with valuable resources to protect themselves and their community.

The event saw strong attendance from senior police officers, local community leaders, and management representatives of PPR Mutiara Kasih, underscoring a shared commitment to safety and partnership.



Dzulbaharin (centre) with officers and members of the Amanita team during the 'Meet Clients Day' at PPR Mutiara Kasih.



Salbiah (centre) about to present a prize to Sharifah Ariya Aleesa Syed Mohd Sahuri from the Kampung Tersusun Tasek nursery, who won the 'Best Dressed Child' contest.

Nursery children gain skills with fun and games at state event

P. CHANDRA SAGARAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

IPOH: Accompanied by their parents, some 2,000 children from nursery classes under the Community Development Department (Kemas) participated in the Perak Children's Day (Smart Kids) event at the Youth and Sports Department Complex here on Nov 2.

A total of 18 activities were held from 7.30am to 2pm for the *tabika* (public nursery) children to get exposed to different scenarios and experiences, and also be acquainted with new skills.

There were exhibitions by various agencies, a family fun walk, swimming classes, fire-fighting skills demonstration by Fire and Rescue Department personnel, health screening, colouring contest, horse-riding and lucky draws.

Some children keen to be in uniform tried out rifles, playing army snipers .

The event was organised by the state government with strategic partners including

Kemas, National Unity and Integration Department, and the district Education Office, with the cooperation of several departments and agencies.

Perak Women's Development, Family, Community Welfare, Entrepreneur Development and Cooperative Committee Exco Datuk Salbiah Mohamed, who was the guest-of-honour, said: "The celebrations provided an opportunity for the kids to unearth their talents. They got a chance to partake in activities suitable for their ages.

"It is our hope that the children will acquire some knowledge from the event, including for their future careers."

Also present was Kemas director-general Datuk Mohd Hanafiah Man.

According to him, autistic children would also be accommodated at *tabika* classes from next year.

"Each state would have one *tabika* class for these special children for a start, with teachers trained to handle these kids," he said.



British convicts on Indonesia death row repatriated

➤ Bilateral deal made on humanitarian grounds, says UK official

DENPASAR: Two British drug convicts, including a grandmother, on death row flew home yesterday as part of a deal to return them on humanitarian grounds.

Indonesia has some of the world's toughest drug laws, but has moved to release more than half a dozen high-profile detainees in the last year.

Lindsay Sandiford, 69, was sentenced to death in Bali in 2013 after she was convicted of trafficking drugs.

She was repatriated along with Shahab Shahabadi, 36, who was serving a life sentence for drug offences after his arrest in 2014.

Both left Bali on a Qatar Airways flight to London via Doha, said Indonesian Law and Human Rights Ministry official I Nyoman Gede Surya Mataram yesterday.

They had been presented before the media in a handover ceremony at the Kerobokan Prison a day earlier.

Their "detention will be moved to the United Kingdom" under the bilateral deal, the

official said.

"After we hand (the convicts) over to the United Kingdom government, (it) is fully responsible for the legal decision that will be given there but still respecting our legal decision."

Sandiford wound up behind bars after Indonesian Customs officers found cocaine worth about US\$2.14 million (RM8.94 million) hidden in a false bottom of her suitcase when she landed in Bali in 2012.

She admitted to the offences but said she had agreed to carry the narcotics after a drug syndicate threatened to kill her son.

The repatriation comes after Indonesia's Senior Law and Human Rights Minister Yusril Ihza Mahendra signed a deal with British Foreign Minister Yvette Cooper last month for the transfer of Sandiford and Shahab.

Both prisoners are suffering from severe health problems.

Yusril said last month Sandiford was "seriously ill" while Shahab was "suffering from various serious illnesses, including mental health issues".

Britain's Deputy Ambassador to Indonesia Matthew Downing said the two were being repatriated on "humanitarian grounds".

"When they first arrive in the United Kingdom, the priority will be about their health.

"They will be going through a health assessment, and any treatment and

rehabilitation that they need."

The two will be "governed by the law and procedures of the United Kingdom government upon their return," he said.

Sandiford's case caught media attention in Britain, with one newspaper publishing in 2015 an article in which she detailed her fear of death.

"My execution is imminent and I know I might die at any time now. I could be taken tomorrow from my cell. I have started to write goodbye letters to members of my family."

As of August, nearly 600 inmates were on death row in Indonesia, according to rights group KontraS, citing official data.

Among them are about 90 foreigners, according to the Immigration and Correction Ministry.

Indonesia last carried out executions in 2016, killing one of its own citizens and three Nigerian drug convicts by firing squad.

President Prabowo Subianto's administration has repatriated several high-profile inmates since he took office in 2024, including the last five members of the "Bali Nine" drug ring.

In December, Filipina inmate Mary Jane Veloso tearfully reunited with her family after nearly 15 years on death row.

French national Serge Atlaoui, 61, was returned home in February after 18 years on death row. - AFP

Japan police to shoot wild bears

TOKYO: Japan's National Police Agency on Thursday amended its rules to allow police officers to use rifles to kill bears, in response to a recent surge in bear attacks on humans, Kyodo News Agency reported.

Regulations for police rifle use have hitherto been restrictive, limited to hijacking incidents or extreme cases. The amendment would take effect on Nov 13.

In Iwate and Akita prefectures, where the highest number of bear attacks have been reported, police firearms task forces from other prefectures would conduct joint training with local hunting associations and others to gain a better understanding of bear habits and vulnerabilities.

Police officers are permitted to kill bears that appear in urban areas of the two prefectures under the enforcement law if there is not enough time to wait for approval from local authorities for an emergency shooting.

There would be two teams of police officers stationed in each prefecture. Each team would consist of a commanding officer, a liaison to local authorities and two snipers.

The Environment Ministry said the number of deaths caused by bears since April reached a record 13 as of Wednesday.

Last month, Cabinet Chief Secretary Minoru Kihara ordered the police agency to consider allowing rifles to be used to kill bears.

On Tuesday and Wednesday, the agency despatched officers to the prefectures to assess the situation after receiving requests for assistance.

There are about 2,100 personnel belonging to firearms task forces under the riot squads of each prefectural police. They are equipped with rifles, submachine guns and other weapons to deal with incidents involving firearms.

Police have evacuated local residents, secured surrounding areas and patrolled school routes where bears have appeared.

Northeastern Japan prefectures Iwate, Akita, Aomori, Miyagi and Yamagata saw a "disastrous" beech nut harvest, one of the main food sources for bears, in the current fiscal year that started in April, the regional forest office said on Thursday.

The severe shortage of the crop is apparently linked to the growing number of bear sightings in human-populated areas. - Bernama-Kyodo

North Korea fires unidentified ballistic missile

SEOUL: North Korea fired at least one ballistic missile yesterday, Seoul's military said, about a week after US President Donald Trump approved South Korea's plan to build a nuclear-powered submarine.

"North Korea fired an unidentified ballistic missile towards (the) East Sea," South Korea's joint chiefs of staff said, referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan.

The missile landed in the sea outside Japan's economic waters, and no damage or injuries have been reported, said Japanese Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi.

Trump had announced that South Korea would build the submarine in the United States, where nuclear technology is among the most sensitive and tightly guarded military secrets.

Unlike diesel-powered submarines, which must regularly surface to recharge their batteries, nuclear-powered ones can remain submerged for far longer.

Analysts say developing a nuclear-powered submarine would mark a leap in South Korea's naval and defence industrial base, joining a select group of countries with such vessels.

Only the United States, Australia, China,

Russia, India, France and Britain have moved towards nuclear-powered submarines, according to media and analysis reports.

South Korea's presidential office has said Seoul needed Washington's approval as it requires the raw material needed to build a nuclear-powered submarine, which is restricted for military use.

Since North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's 2019 summit with Trump collapsed over the scope of denuclearisation and sanctions relief, Pyongyang has repeatedly declared itself an "irreversible" nuclear state. - AFP

Typhoon Kalmaegi ravages Vietnam, 188 dead in Philippines

VIETNAM: Typhoon *Kalmaegi* churned across Vietnam yesterday, claiming five more lives after its devastating passage through the Philippines, where the death toll rose to at least 188.

Kalmaegi unleashed record rains and flooding in central Philippines this week, sweeping away cars, trucks and shipping containers before lashing Vietnam on Thursday.

"The (second-floor) roof of my house was blown away," said 42-year-old fisherman Nguyen Van Tam in Vietnam's Gia Lai province, where the storm made landfall packing sustained winds of up to 149kph, said the Environment Ministry.

Vietnamese authorities were assessing the damage, and the ministry reported five dead and 57 collapsed houses in Gia Lai and neighbouring Dak Lak.

Nearly 3,000 more had their roofs blown off or damaged while 11 boats or ships sank.

In the streets along Gia Lai's Quy

Nhon beach, AFP journalists saw rescue workers and soldiers working with residents to clear uprooted trees, remove debris and collect scattered metal roofing sheets.

"This is the second time I have witnessed such a typhoon. The other one was 10 years ago or so, but not that strong compared with this," said Tran Ngo An, 64.

The state power company said 1.6 million clients lost power as the typhoon smashed the central coast, but service to a third of them were later restored.

The fast-moving storm had churned inland by morning with significantly weakened winds, but heavy rain was still forecast for much of the central coast, the national weather bureau said.

Scientists warn that storms are becoming more powerful due to human-driven climate change.

Warmer oceans allow typhoons to strengthen rapidly and a warmer atmosphere holds more moisture,

meaning heavier rainfall.

Kalmaegi had battered the islands of Cebu and Negros in the Philippines before swooping back out to sea.

Floodwaters described as unprecedented rushed through the hardest hit Cebu province towns and cities, where the search for missing people continues.

Philippines authorities raised the death toll to 188 on Thursday, with 135 missing.

The typhoon hit central Vietnam as it was still reeling from more than a week of flooding and record rains that killed at least 47 people and submerged historic sites.

The heavy rains starting in late October had drenched the former imperial capital Hue and the ancient town of Hoi An, both Unesco-listed sites, turning streets into canals and flooding tens of thousands of homes.

Up to 1.7m of rain fell over one 24-hour period in a downpour breaking national records.

With more than 3,200km of



Residents resting on folding beds in the remains of their home after it was destroyed by floods brought on by Typhoon *Kalmaegi* in Talisay, Cebu in the Philippines. - REUTERS/PIC

coastline and a network of 2,300 rivers, Vietnam faces a high risk of flooding.

Before *Kalmaegi*, natural disasters had already left 279 people dead or

missing this year and caused more than US\$2 billion (RM8.35 billion) in damage, according to Vietnam's national statistics office. - AFP

'Drug boat' strike kills three, death toll at 70

► If you keep trafficking narcotics, we will eliminate you: Pentagon chief

WASHINGTON: US forces on Thursday struck another alleged drug trafficking boat in the Caribbean, killing three people, said Pentagon Chief Pete Hegseth, bringing the death toll from Washington's controversial anti-narcotics campaign to at least 70.

The United States began carrying out such strikes, which experts say amount to extrajudicial killings even if they target known traffickers, in early September, taking aim at vessels in the Caribbean and eastern Pacific.

The US strikes have destroyed at least 18 vessels, namely 17 boats and a semi-submersible, but Washington has yet to make public any concrete evidence that its targets were smuggling narcotics or posed a threat to the United States.

Hegseth released aerial footage on X of the latest strike, which he said took place in international waters like the previous strikes and targeted "a vessel operated by a designated terrorist organisation".

The video showed a boat traveling through the water before exploding into flames.

"Three male narco-terrorists who were aboard the vessel were killed," he said, without any further identifying information.

"To all narco-terrorists who threaten our homeland, if you want to stay alive, stop trafficking drugs. If you keep trafficking deadly drugs, we will kill you."

Like some previous videos released by the US government, a section of the boat is obscured for unspecified reasons.

US President Donald Trump's administration has built up significant forces in Latin America, in what it says is its campaign to stamp out drug trafficking.

It has deployed six navy ships in the Caribbean, sent F-35 stealth warplanes to Puerto Rico and ordered the *USS Gerald R. Ford* carrier strike group to the region.

The governments and families of those killed in the US strikes have said many of the dead were civilians, primarily fishermen.

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro has repeatedly accused Trump of seeking to oust him.

US bombers have also conducted shows of force near Venezuela, flying over the Caribbean Sea off the country's coast on at least four occasions since mid-October.

Maduro, who has been indicted on drug charges in the United States, insists that there is no drug cultivation in his country, which he says is used as a trafficking route for Colombian cocaine against its will.

The Trump administration has said the United States is engaged in "armed conflict" with Latin American drug cartels, describing them as terrorist groups as part of its justification for the strikes.

The United Nations has asked the United States to cease its campaign, with Rights Chief Volker Turk saying the killings have taken place "in circumstances that find no justification in international law". - AFP

Nearly five million tonnes of debris in Jamaica after storm

HAMILTON: The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on Thursday said nearly five million metric tonnes of debris was generated across western Jamaica after *Hurricane Melissa* struck on Oct 28, Anadolu Ajansi reported.

"Initial estimates show that the damage caused is about the equivalent of 30% of Jamaica's GDP, a figure that is expected to rise," said UNDP official Kishan Khoday, its resident representative for the Bahamas, Belize, Bermuda, the Cayman Islands, Jamaica, and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

He noted that "UNDP, through our digital impact assessment platform and AI-powered tools, has seen that close to five million metric tonnes of debris has been created across western Jamaica. This would fill about 500,000 standard truckloads".

"This includes two million metric tonnes of building debris, 1.3 million tonnes of vegetation debris, unimaginable destruction of forests and landscape in western Jamaica, and 1.4 million metric tonnes of personal property debris."

Khoday said UNDP's efforts would focus on "recovery plans and strategies, SMEs and livelihoods recovery, solar for community needs, debris removal and restoration of ecosystems".

Hurricane Melissa has battered Haiti, Jamaica and Cuba since late October, causing widespread destruction and loss of life.

According to local reports, the death toll across Haiti and Jamaica from widespread flooding and landslides caused by *Hurricane Melissa* had risen to 75 as of Wednesday.

In Cuba, where official death figures have not yet been released, the United Nations estimates about 2.2 million people have been affected, with damage reported to some 60,000 homes, 461 health centres and 1,552 schools. - Bernama-Anadolu



PROTEST GESTURE ... Bystanders filming federal agents on Thursday during immigration raids in the Little Village neighbourhood, after US President Donald Trump ordered increased federal law enforcement presence to assist in crime prevention in Chicago, Illinois. - REUTERSPIC

'Systemic racism' embedded in UK police, says report

LONDON: Decades of "systemic racism" within London's Metropolitan Police (Met) mean discrimination is "embedded" into its systems, leadership and culture, a new 126-page review of the force said yesterday.

The probe warned that the Met's racism impacts internally and in public-facing policing.

Authored by Shereen Daniels, a leading expert on human resources and addressing systemic racism within complex organisations, the report tries to "diagnose" why the force has struggled to reform despite decades of warnings.

"This work traces how racial harm becomes built into systems, behaviours and leadership norms that normalise discrimination and protect the organisation from consequence."

A string of scandals in recent years have rocked confidence in United Kingdom policing, particularly the 2021 kidnap, rape and murder of Londoner Sarah Everard by serving Met officer Wayne Couzens.

More recent scandals have shone a fresh light on enduring racism, homophobia, sexism and misogyny.

Daniels mined internal Met materials alongside public records for her report.

"These reveal how the organisation's systems and culture align to maintain, rather than dismantle, the conditions that cause racial harm."

She found internally, officers use gender, class, religion and other factors, alongside race, to decide "who is seen as credible or confrontational, protected or punished, invited in or pushed out".

Meanwhile, "on the street", similar biases shape "who is stopped, searched, escorted home or forced to the ground".

She said reform must be measured "through verifiable and felt change in the lived experiences of Black Londoners, officers, staff and volunteers". - AFP

US government shutdown causes travel chaos

WASHINGTON: Travellers across the United States were left scrambling to rebook flights as the government shutdown heaps pressure on the country's air traffic control system, prompting hundreds of flight cancellations yesterday at major American airports.

Airlines yesterday began implementing up to a 10% reduction in flights for 40 high-traffic areas of the country, complying with a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) order made on safety grounds.

More than 750 US flights scheduled yesterday were pre-emptively cancelled on Thursday, according to tracking website FlightAware.

American Airlines said it was reducing its flight schedules "amounting to 220 flights cancelled each day".

Delta Airlines said it axed about 170 flights scheduled for yesterday, while broadcaster CNN reported that Southwest Airlines nixed about 100 flights set for that day.

The shutdown has left tens of thousands of air

traffic controllers, airport security staff and others without pay, causing personnel shortages.

On Thursday, more than 6,400 US flights were delayed, with some 200 cancellations, as passengers faced long lines at security checkpoints, FlightAware data showed.

Major airports were impacted, with travellers at Boston and Newark airports facing average delays of more than two hours, and those at Chicago's O'Hare and Washington's Reagan National delayed more than an hour.

Authorities said they wanted to act before an accident occurred.

"We are not going to wait for a safety problem to truly manifest itself, when early indicators are telling us that we can take action today to prevent things from deteriorating," said FAA Administrator Bryan Bedford.

The reduction measures come as the country enters its busiest travel time of the year, with the Thanksgiving holiday just weeks away.

The new cancellations could affect

thousands of flights every day.

Flight reductions began at 4% yesterday and would rise to 10%, media outlets reported.

Implementing the order on short notice would be a challenge for airlines, which operate complex networks that rely on many moving parts and personnel.

United Airlines and Delta, two of the country's largest carriers, have said they are complying with the order but it would not affect their international routes.

Federal agencies across the United States have been grinding to a halt since Congress failed to approve funding past Sept 30, with some 1.4 million federal workers, from air traffic controllers to national park rangers, on enforced leave or working without pay.

Many in high-stress aviation-related jobs are calling in sick and potentially working second jobs in order to pay their bills, said Transport Secretary Sean Duffy on Wednesday. - AFP

Kazakhstan to join Abraham Accords

➤ Many more countries trying to enter this club of strength, says US president

WASHINGTON: Kazakhstan said on Thursday it would join the Abraham Accords between Israel and mainly Muslim nations, in a largely symbolic move aimed at boosting US President Donald Trump's push for Middle East peace.

The central Asian republic has had diplomatic ties with Israel for decades, unlike the four Arab states that normalised relations with Israel under the original accords signed during Trump's first term.

But with Trump aiming to shore up his fragile Gaza ceasefire deal, Washington is pushing to get as much support as possible

behind a wider peace initiative.

The announcement comes as Trump hosts Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev and leaders of the other central Asian republics, namely Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Kyrgyzstan.

After the leaders arrived at the White House, Trump posted on Truth Social that he, Tokayev and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had held a "great call".

An official signing ceremony would be announced soon, he said, adding that "there are many more countries trying to join this club of strength".

Kazakhstan said on Thursday it was "natural and logical" for it to join.

"Our anticipated accession to the Abraham Accords represents a natural and logical continuation of Kazakhstan's foreign policy course, grounded in dialogue, mutual respect and regional stability," its government said.

US Special Envoy Steve Witkoff said earlier a new country would join the accords, sparking initial speculation, later quashed, that it could be the elusive prize of Saudi Arabia.

Kazakhstan would be the first country to join since the original Abraham Accords in 2020, when the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco normalised ties with Israel.

Saudi Arabia has been in talks with the United States on normalising ties with Israel, which would be a historic milestone as the kingdom is home to Islam's two holiest sites.

But the Gulf kingdom stepped back after the Gaza war broke out.

Saudi Arabia has long insisted that it cannot normalise ties without progress towards an independent Palestinian state, a prospect long opposed by Netanyahu.

At the America Business Forum in Miami on Wednesday, Trump said: "We have a lot of people joining the Abraham Accords and

hopefully, we are going to get Saudi Arabia very soon."

The US-brokered Gaza deal has been in place since Oct 10 but remains shaky, with Israel accusing Hamas of dragging its feet in returning the bodies of hostages.

Israel has also launched a number of attacks despite the truce, claiming that its forces have come under attack and Hamas is not doing enough to give up its weapons.

Witkoff, one of the key negotiators, said on Thursday he was hopeful it could hold, adding that they were "right in the middle of standing up a decommissioning process of weapons" by Hamas.

Hamas insisted that the process would depend on the deployment of an international security force, which would be greenlighted under a draft United Nations Security Council resolution presented by the United States this week, said Witkoff. - AFP

Trump expects international stabilisation force in Gaza 'very soon'

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday he expects a US-coordinated international stabilisation force to be on the ground in Gaza "very soon", following two years of war in the territory between Israel and Hamas.

The multinational force, likely to include troops from Egypt, Qatar, Turkiye and the United Arab Emirates, is part of Trump's postwar governance plan for Gaza.

The plan helped lead to a fragile ceasefire between Israel and the Palestinian militant group on Oct 10, but the humanitarian crisis in Gaza has not abated.

"It is going to be very soon. And Gaza is working out very well," said Trump at a White House event with Central Asian leaders.

"You have not been hearing too much about problems and I will tell you, we have had countries that have volunteered if there is a problem with Hamas."

The force is supposed to train and support vetted Palestinian police in the Gaza Strip, with backing from Egypt and Jordan.

It also would be tasked with securing border areas and preventing weapons smuggling to Hamas.

On Wednesday, the United States circulated a draft United Nations (UN) Security Council resolution to partner nations aimed at shoring up Trump's plan, including by greenlighting the international force.

Washington's UN Envoy Mike Waltz shared the draft with 10 elected council members and several regional partners, including Egypt, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and Turkiye, a spokesperson for the US mission said in a statement.



Sources said several countries were willing to participate in the force for Gaza. - REUTERS/PIC

A vote has not yet been scheduled.

According to diplomatic sources, several countries have indicated their willingness to participate in the force, but insist on a council mandate before deploying troops into the

Palestinian territory.

The head of the US Central Command, the military command responsible for the Middle East, said last month during a visit to Gaza that no US troops would be deployed there. - AFP

BRIEFS

WASHINGTON OPEN TO TALKS ON LIFTING BANS ON IRAN

WASHINGTON: US President Donald Trump said on Thursday Iran has asked for the heavy US sanctions against Tehran to be lifted, and he is open to having a discussion about it. In mid-June, Israel launched an unprecedented bombing campaign against Iran, triggering a war that saw the United States join briefly with strikes on Iranian nuclear sites. Trump said Iran had once been the "bully of the Middle East" but no longer had the "possibility of nuclear weapons". He has repeatedly said the strikes obliterated Iran's nuclear programme, but the full extent of the damage remains unknown. Oman, which has hosted several rounds of US-Iran nuclear talks, has called on both sides to return to negotiations. The talks had aimed for a new agreement that would curb Iran's nuclear activities in return for sanctions relief. - AFP

URGENT MEDICAL CARE NEEDED IN PALESTINE: W.H.O

LONDON: World Health Organisation (WHO) Director-General Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said on Thursday more than 16,500 people in Gaza are in urgent need of medical care, Anadolu Ajansi reported. He added that WHO has evacuated 19 critically ill patients and 93 companions from Gaza to Italy for medical treatment, expressing gratitude to the Italian government for its support. "We urge more countries to receive patients from Gaza as over 16,500 people still need urgent medical care that is not available in the Strip." He also called for all evacuation routes, particularly those from the West Bank, including East Jerusalem, to be opened to facilitate the transfer of patients in need. - Bernama-Anadolu

UN council removes sanctions on Syrian leader

GENEVA: The United Nations (UN) Security Council has removed sanctions on Syrian President Ahmed al-Sharaa, who is due to meet US President Donald Trump at the White House on Monday.

The US-drafted resolution on Thursday also lifted sanctions on Syrian Interior Minister Anas Khattab. It received 14 votes in favour while China abstained.

Washington has been urging the 15-member council for months to ease Syria sanctions.

Trump announced a major US policy shift in May when he said he would lift sanctions on Syria.

"I think he is doing a very good job. It is a tough neighborhood and he is a tough guy, but I got along with him very well. And a lot of progress has been made with Syria," he said on Thursday of Sharaa.

"We did take the sanctions off Syria in order

to give them a fighting shot."

After 13 years of civil war, Syria's former president Bashar al-Assad was ousted in December in a lightning offensive by insurgent forces led by the Islamist Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS).

Formerly known as the Nusra Front, HTS was al-Qaeda's official wing in Syria until breaking ties in 2016. Since May 2014, the group has been on the council's al-Qaeda and Islamic State sanctions list.

A number of HTS members are also under UN sanctions, including a travel ban, asset freeze and arms embargo.

UN sanctions monitors have seen no "active ties" this year between al-Qaeda and HTS, according to a UN report in July.

China abstained because the resolution did not properly address its concerns about the

counter-terrorism and security situation in Syria, said China's UN Ambassador Fu Cong.

China has long been vocal about its concerns with the fate of the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (Etim) in Syria. Uyghur fighters from China and Central Asia are members of the group.

Rights groups accuse Beijing of widespread abuses of the mainly Muslim ethnic minority.

Fu said the resolution adopted on Thursday "makes it clear" that Syria should "take decisive actions to combat terrorist acts and respond to the threat of foreign terrorist fighters, which include Etim in Syria".

Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia said Moscow supported the brief resolution because it "most importantly reflects the interests and aspirations of the Syrian people themselves".

Russia diplomatically shielded its ally Assad during the war, casting more than a dozen vetoes at the council, on many occasions backed by China. The council met several times a month throughout the war to discuss Syria's political and humanitarian situation and chemical weapons.

After years of council division, Syria's UN Ambassador Ibrahim Olabi praised the decision on Thursday as a "message of support for Syrian women and men in their effort to rebuild their homeland and restore their lives".

"The new Syria will be a success story. It will be a shining model that proves that the optimal path in international relations is positive engagement and constructive cooperation. If there are concerns, Syria is fully prepared to address them with sincere intent based on mutual respect," he told the council. - Reuters



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

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

BY HAYATUN RAZAK
sunbiz@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Ban Lee Hin Engineering and Construction Sdn Bhd is eyeing a 2027-2028 initial public offering in anticipation of a stronger market then.

Chairman Datuk Tony Looi said it is pushing its listing timeline from 2026 to 2027-2028 because of the challenging operating environment and the need for greater market stability before going public.

"We were supposed to list in 2026. But we postponed this plan. The last two years, we needed time to observe the economy. Then we looked at the whole market, the global market. It's not good timing for construction. So, we have postponed it to 2027 or 2028," he told *SunBiz* in an interview.

Looi said the domestic construction sector is under pressure with weaker investor sentiment and rising costs. "Currently in Malaysia, the construction sector is facing a lot of challenges ... because now the global economy is slowing down, and building material (cost) is increasing a lot."

Ban Lee Hin's order book has shrunk compared with previous years, when projects could reach RM160 million each year and annual turnover stood at around RM200 million. Now, the pace of new work has slowed.

"So orders have slowed down a bit. Because our clients were mostly foreign investors and developers such as Japanese, Koreans and Europeans. Now, the construction boom in Kuala Lumpur is led mainly by the Chinese,

Ban Lee Hin postpones listing to 2027-2028

➤ Engineering and construction company anticipates stronger and more stable market by then

and this has not translated into more work for us," Looi explained.

Even with the slowdown, he is hopeful that recovery will take shape. "So Malaysia has slowed down. But even Japan is facing economic problems. Hopefully, end of this year, we'll be slowly moving up."

Looi stressed that survival in the current market depends on financial discipline and working with reliable partners.

"So hopefully, we look for good paymasters. That's the most important thing. How to survive during tough times. So we need good paymasters," he said, referring to clients with strong financial standing who can ensure timely payments.

At present, Ban Lee Hin is focusing on selected projects, with ongoing jobs in Selangor, Kuala Lumpur and Shah Alam, while recently

completing developments in Johor and Malacca.

"Currently, we're just surviving on our current projects. It's still okay," Looi said.

Beyond construction, the group is diversifying into new ventures, including online food and beverage and green energy projects. It has acquired land in Johor and Malacca worth over RM10 million for future developments.

Looi disclosed that the firm is studying opportunities in Cambodia and Thailand, which offer more favourable conditions compared with Malaysia. In Cambodia, for example, property ownership rules and tax exemptions for new businesses provide incentives for expansion.

"Maybe we will invest in some overseas projects in the coming future. So, we will form a new office in Cambodia or Thailand," he said.



Looi says Ban Lee Hin is studying opportunities in Cambodia and Thailand.

MARC: M'sian bond market increasingly ready to back digital infra, data centre sectors

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's bond market is still in the early stages of participation in digital infrastructure and data centre financing but is becoming increasingly ready to support the sectors, said MARC Ratings Bhd head of portfolio for structured finance, property and retail Yazmin Abd Aziz.

She said that while many data centre financing deals have already been concluded in Malaysia, most have so far been done on a private or bilateral basis.

However, Yazmin added that growing discussions within the market show rising interest in developing public market issuances for the sector.

"There have been a lot of deals done already in Malaysia. However, I would say most or all of them for now are on a private basis. It is still in the early stages. We have not yet had any direct issuance, public issuance that is directly linked to a data centre. But a lot of conversation is going on," Yazmin said during a panel session on MARC Malaysian Bond and Sukuk Conference 2025 (MMBS 2025) held virtually yesterday.

She noted that market participants were now laying the groundwork for public market participation, with both issuers and investors learning together as the industry evolves.

"Everyone is setting the building blocks to have penetration in the public markets for data centre issuances and everybody is curious on the same learning curve, where we are moving together. We are seeing how best to get capital markets to facilitate these data centre investments," Yazmin said.

She said investor appetite is strong as data centres are viewed as long-term assets with predictable cash flows that align with

institutional investment objectives.

Yazmin said the next step is to improve market familiarity and data transparency to encourage wider investor participation.

She added that as the sector matures and more rated transactions emerge, the bond market will gain greater confidence to finance Malaysia's digital infrastructure growth.

Meanwhile, Moody's Investors Service vice-president senior credit officer Nidhi Dhruv said Malaysia is one of Asia Pacific's fastest-growing data centre markets, with capacity projected to expand at a compound annual growth rate of about 25% through 2030.

She said Malaysia is well placed to capture a large share of this investment because of its cost competitiveness, land availability, stable policies and proximity to Singapore, which faces land and energy limits.

Nidhi said data centres are capital-intensive assets that require heavy upfront investment and a construction period of two to three years and noted that getting the right mix of funding from project finance to capital markets is crucial to sustain growth.

She added that the total data centre capacity in Asia-Pacific now exceeds 15.5 gigawatts and is expected to more than double in the next five years, requiring US\$900 billion (RM3.75 trillion) in investments.

"Data centre power consumption will outpace renewable and even nuclear power development in the region. Over the next five years, we expect data centres to continue relying on fossil fuels," she said. — Bernama

Commemorative coins to mark Malaysia's Asean chairmanship, DoSM's 75th anniversary

PETALING JAYA: Bank Negara Malaysia (BNM) has issued two limited-edition commemorative coins to mark Malaysia's chairmanship of Asean in 2025 (Asean25) and the 75th anniversary of the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DoSM75).

The Asean25 comprises:
➤ single-coloured sterling silver coin proof, with 92.5% purity and weighing 31 grams. This coin has a face value of RM10 and will be sold at RM363 per piece. The mintage quantity is 1,000 pieces.
➤ two-coin Nordic gold brilliant uncirculated set, made of copper and several other metals, weighing 8.5 grams each and carrying a face value of RM1 per coin. It is sold as a set of two coins to accentuate the novelty of its design, priced at RM24.20 per set. The mintage quantity is 5,000 sets.



The Asean25 sterling silver set

➤ a set of two containing one single-coloured sterling silver proof coin and one Nordic gold proof coin. The mintage quantity is 1,000 sets and priced at RM396 per set.

The DoSM75 series comprises:

➤ single sterling silver, with 92.5% purity and weighing 31 grams. This coin has a face value of RM10 and will be

sold at RM363 per piece. The mintage quantity is 1,000 pieces.

➤ single Nordic gold brilliant uncirculated, made of copper and several other metals, weighing 8.5 grams and carrying a face value of RM1. It will be sold at RM16.50 per piece with mintage quantity of 5,000 pieces.

➤ set of two containing one sterling silver proof coin and one Nordic gold proof coin. The mintage quantity is 1,000 sets and priced at RM396 per set.

The commemorative coins are sold individually.

A purchase limit is applied for each design. Each person may purchase one set of two, one sterling silver coin (proof) and up to five Nordic gold coins. The public can place their orders at duit.bnm.gov.my from now until 8.59am Nov 17.



The DosM75 sterling silver set

Jeffrey Cheah commits RM500m to set up one of Malaysia's biggest education endowments



Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin (second, left) being briefed on Sunway's CSR flagship programme initiatives, as Cheah (third, left), Razman and other distinguished guests look on.

PETALING JAYA: Tan Sri Dr Jeffrey Cheah, founder and chairman of Sunway Group as well as founder and trustee of Jeffrey Cheah Foundation (JCF), has committed RM100 million annually over the next five years to create what is set to become one of Malaysia's largest education endowments.

The endowment is modelled on legacy institutions, such as Harvard University and University of al-Qarawiyin, one of the oldest universities in the world, and is intended to provide support for academic excellence, research and innovation at Sunway University, in perpetuity.

Cheah said: "As long as I have the privilege of time, I will keep giving. Over the next five years alone, I am committing a total of RM500 million to our endowment. We are only at the beginning of our story, but my aspiration is for Sunway University to grow into one of the world's great centres of learning and to continue uplifting lives long after I am gone."

The announcement was made by JCF trustee and Sunway University pro-chancellor Tan Sri Razman M Hashim at the JCF 2025 Scholarships and Awards Ceremony, held in the presence of Tengku Permaisuri Selangor Tengku Permaisuri

Norashikin, where a total of RM75 million worth of scholarships and grants were awarded this year.

During the ceremony, Tengku Permaisuri Norashikin personally presented some 100 students with their awards, including the recipients of the inaugural Sir Jeffrey Cheah Sunway Medical School Scholarship for Doctor of Medicine Programme, for outstanding medical students with the training to be future-ready specialists, and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Community Scholarship, which provide students from welfare homes and underprivileged communities the opportunity to pursue their higher education.

This year, more than 6,700 students will receive various scholarships from JCF, including the Sunway University Postgraduate Studentships and Scholarship, Sunway-Victoria University Excellence Scholarship, and the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation Community Scholarship.

To date, JCF has disbursed more than RM967 million in scholarships and grants, and is expected to surpass RM1 billion by 2026, underscoring its position as one of the country's most significant private philanthropic vehicles in education.

Westports, Maybank Islamic eye China's halal market

➤ Port operator, bank keen to tap into surging demand from world's largest consumer base

SHANGHAI: As Malaysia seeks a stronger role in global halal logistics, major port operator Westports Holdings Bhd is positioning itself to capitalise on China's rapidly growing halal food and beverage market, which is projected to reach US\$217.1 billion (RM906 billion) by 2034.

Handling a significant share of Malaysia's container and conventional cargo, Westports is well placed to tap into the surging demand for halal-certified products from the world's largest consumer market.

Westports Holdings group managing director Datuk Eddie Lee (*pic*) said the port operator aims to promote Malaysia as a regional halal logistics hub through its participation in the Malaysia International Halal Showcase in Shanghai 2025 (Mihas@Shanghai 2025), held alongside the China International Import Expo, one of the world's biggest import promotion platforms.

"Together with the Malaysia External

Trade Development Corporation and Mihas, we want to showcase Malaysia to the world.

"Halal logistics is a major market, especially with China's 1.5 billion population. Even for durian, we now have halal-certified, value-added products. People in China love durian and halal food, and this presents a major opportunity," Lee told Bernama on the sidelines of Mihas@Shanghai 2025 here.

He added that with 20% of Westports' container volume originating from China, the port is banking on its strategic location along the Straits of Malacca and high service standards to become the preferred gateway for halal shipments.

"For Westports, we will ensure full compliance with halal requirements. Every halal claim is verified through proper documentation to preserve credibility and integrity," Lee said.

Meanwhile, Maybank Islamic Bhd's programme director for strategic initiatives, Dr Muhd Ramadhan Fitri Ellias, said the bank's participation in Mihas@Shanghai 2025 aims to support Malaysian MSMEs in expanding their businesses in China.

He said the bank would bring along MSME entrepreneurs who are also Maybank Islamic

clients to meet strategic partners in China, including companies such as Alibaba Group, to help local firms distribute their products through Alibaba's platforms.



At the same time, the bank seeks to attract Chinese halal industry players to invest in Malaysia and use the country as a hub for their halal operations.

"We can assist Chinese enterprises looking to invest in Malaysia and grow their halal businesses across Asean. We have a strong network not only in Malaysia but throughout all Asean countries," Muhd Ramadhan said.

He said China's halal market has tremendous potential, supported by a growing awareness and understanding of halal products among Chinese consumers.

"I believe the potential is very strong. In fact, China is currently Malaysia's second-largest market for exported halal products.

"There is a growing realisation in China that halal is not just about religion but also about cleanliness, integrity in the food production process, and high food-handling standards. They see halal not merely as a religious requirement but as a mark of hygiene and quality - among the highest standards in the industry," he added.

Malaysia's planned carbon tax seen as neutral for utilities sector

KUALA LUMPUR: Malaysia's plan to introduce a carbon tax is expected to be earnings-neutral for the utilities sector, said Apex Securities Bhd.

In a note yesterday, it said it expects the tax will have minimal direct impact on power producers.

"We expect the carbon tax to be passed through to consumers under the incentive-based regulation framework in line with global practice, resulting in limited direct earnings impact on power producers," Apex Securities said.

Nevertheless, it is also of the view that to mitigate political backlash, domestic and low-usage consumers will likely be exempted or subsidised.

"Hence, under a no-pass-through scenario, we estimate the financial year 2026 earnings impact at -10% for Tenaga Nasional Bhd, -81% for Malakoff Corporation Bhd, and -4.0% for Petronas Gas Bhd," it said.

The securities firm maintained its "overweight" call on the power and utilities sector.

"The proposed carbon tax should be earnings-neutral in practice. Our top pick is Tenaga (Buy, target price: RM15.77)," it added.

It also said that within the power sector, coal and natural gas-fired plants represent the dominant sources of scope 1 emissions, and will therefore bear the brunt of any carbon tax implementation.

To recap, Bloomberg reported that Malaysia is planning to introduce a carbon tax at an initial rate of RM15 per tonne of carbon dioxide equivalent, but Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan clarified that the final rate is yet to be determined. - Bernama

Knight Frank facilitates landmark RM800m Penang industrial asset deal

PETALING JAYA: Knight Frank Malaysia has facilitated a landmark RM800 million sale and leaseback industrial transaction involving about 135 acres of freehold industrial land and manufacturing facilities in Seberang Perai, Penang, from Ann Joo Steel Bhd to Axis Real Estate Investment Trust (Axis-REIT).

Knight Frank Penang senior executive director Mark Saw said: "We are honoured to have been entrusted to market and sell this prime 135-acre freehold industrial land in Seberang Perai, which holds historical significance to Ann Joo. This exceptionally rare

opportunity represents the biggest industrial transaction of the year, reinforcing strong investor confidence in Penang's industrial property market growth trajectory, particularly on the mainland. What makes this a one-of-its-kind transaction is the highly scarce freehold industrial asset available for sale in Penang which sits outside of the jurisdiction of Penang Development Corporation. This landmark deal underscores the growing strength and investor confidence in Penang's industrial property market, particularly on the mainland."

Knight Frank Malaysia land and industrial

solutions senior executive director Allan Sim remarked that driven by robust demand from semiconductor, electronics and high-value manufacturing sectors, Penang continues to attract both local and international investors seeking strategic landbank opportunities.

He added the transaction also reflects the rising land values and increasing scarcity of sizeable industrial plots, reinforcing Seberang Perai's position as one of Malaysia's most dynamic industrial growth corridors.

"This milestone underscores sustained appetite for scalable and well-positioned

industrial assets, particularly in high-growth nodes like Penang. With sustained foreign investor confidence, and the continued attractiveness of the northern region anchored by strong industry fundamentals, this presents a timely opportunity for landowners to unlock and realize the value of their assets," said Sim.

A formal signing ceremony was held at Knight Frank Malaysia's headquarters in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday, marking the successful conclusion of an important milestone as part of the transaction in the presence of senior representatives from all parties.

China exports slump as US tariffs bite

➤ Beijing faces mounting pressure to boost domestic demand as overseas sales stumble

BEIJING: Chinese exports unexpectedly fell in October after months of frontloading US orders to beat President Donald Trump's tariffs, in a stark reminder of the manufacturing juggernaut's reliance on American consumers even as it woos buyers elsewhere.

The world's second-largest economy has pushed hard to diversify its export markets since Trump won last November's presidential election, bracing for a resumption of the trade war that dominated his first term in office, and seeking closer trade ties with Southeast Asia and the European Union.

But no other country comes close to matching China's sales of more than US\$400 billion (RM1.7 trillion) in goods to the US each year, a loss that economists estimate has cut China's export growth by around 2 percentage points, or roughly 0.3% of GDP.

The October customs data yesterday underlined that point, as China's outbound shipments shrank 1.1%, the worst performance

since February, reversing from an 8.3% rise in September, and missing a forecast for 3% growth in a Reuters poll.

"Last month's weakness was driven by a broad-based slowdown in shipments to non-US markets," said Zichun Huang, China economist at Capital Economics, adding that while shipments to the US fell sharply, a rise in exports to transit hubs such as Vietnam suggested producers were still trying to beat the duties and move inventory to the US.

To be sure, the latest figure was affected by a high base from last October when exports grew at their fastest pace in over two years, as factories began rushing inventory to major markets in anticipation of Trump making a comeback to the White House.

However, most analysts largely agreed Chinese manufacturers had pushed as many goods into the world as possible for now.

"Exports through Vietnam to the US will decelerate once the frontloading is over, and we're there. So I think it's going to be much tougher for China in the fourth quarter, which means it's going to be tougher in the first half of 2026 as well," said Alicia Garcia-Herrero, chief economist for the Asia-Pacific at Natixis.

Chinese exports to the US tumbled 25.17% year-on-year, the data showed, while those to the European Union and Southeast Asian economies - big trading partners with whom policymakers have sought to bolster ties amid

tariff tensions with Washington - grew by just 0.9% and 11%, respectively.

"I think the PMI was already warning us that Chinese exports cannot continue to grow forever, and it's not only because of the US but because the global economy is slowing," Garcia-Herrero said. The official purchasing managers' index fell to a six-month low, with factory owners reporting a marked drop in new export orders.

Woei Chen Ho, economist at UOB Singapore, said the US-China trade truce struck by the two leaders earlier this month would stabilise the outlook in the near-term, but forecast that "both countries will try to reduce their interdependence and we're going to see the US share of China trade, especially exports, drop." Tensions between China and the US unexpectedly spiked in early October, after Trump threatened 100% levies on Chinese goods in response to Beijing dramatically expanding its export controls on rare earth metals. The mood eased after Trump met with Chinese President Xi Jinping last week in South Korea, when both sides agreed to extend their trade truce - previously scheduled to expire on Nov 10 - for another year.

Still, US-bound Chinese goods will face an average tariff rate around 45%, above the 35% level that some economists say wipes out Chinese manufacturers' profit margins.

China's trade surplus came in at US\$90.07

billion in October, from US\$90.45 billion a month prior, and missing a forecast of US\$95.6 billion.

Insufficient domestic demand remains a hurdle, however.

That was underlined by the data on imports, which expanded at their slowest pace in five months, up 1% compared to 7.4% growth in September and a 3.2% forecast rise. Officials said last month China will aim to raise the percentage of household consumption of GDP "significantly" over the next five years, after a key conclave of the ruling Communist Party's Central Committee mapped out economic and policy goals for 2026-2030.

"Now that export momentum has weakened, China may need to rely more on domestic demand," said Zhang Zhiwei, chief economist at Baoyin Capital Management. "Fiscal policy is expected to be more aggressive in the first quarter of 2026."

China's imports of soybeans, crude oil, and iron ore rose in October from a year earlier, with record soybean purchases from South America attributed to crushers rushing to buy before potential price spikes in Brazil caused by missed China-US shipments, while energy imports were supported by competitive prices.

But copper purchases, key to the construction sector, dropped as consumers shied away from restocking due to high prices for the metal and as a prolonged property downturn continues to crimp demand. - Reuters

Global high-tech tensions set to cloud Web Summit

PARIS: Flashy AI, robotics and self-driving cars will be on show at the annual Web Summit in Lisbon from Monday, but global tensions over high-tech trade, competition and sovereignty will be weighing on the minds of entrepreneurs, investors and policymakers.

Known as the "Davos for geeks", the four-day event in the Portuguese capital is set to welcome over 70,000 visitors, including 2,500 startups and 1,000 investors.

With major global players racing to control the supply chains behind generative artificial intelligence (AI), an appearance by CEO of American chip developer Qualcomm Cristiano Amon will be a hot ticket.

His company recently announced a new range of AI chips designed to compete with sector heavyweight Nvidia and challenger AMD.

Both firms' high-end processors are subject to restrictions from Washington on their export to China on national security grounds.

Several leaders of other top AI players will

also appear in Lisbon, including Microsoft president Brad Smith and Joleen Liang, co-founder of Chinese startup Squirrel AI, which is bringing the technology into classrooms.

One of Europe's hottest tickets, Swedish startup Lovable, is sending boss Anton Osika to vaunt its technology that allows users to create apps and websites via a chatbot without coding experience.

British dictionary publisher Collins dubbed this "vibe coding" approach its word of the year for 2025.

Almost 30% of investment in new sports technology went into AI firms in the first half of this year, investment bank Drake Star found in a study.

In Lisbon, Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova and France's Caroline Garcia will be on stage talking about how AI can improve athletes' performance in their discipline.

Increasingly capable devices ranging from watches and rings able to monitor sleep, heart

rate or body temperature mean that tech's ability to detect initial signs of illness will be another hot topic.

American robotics chiefs in Lisbon will include Amazon Robotics boss Tye Brady and Robert Playter, head of the Boston Dynamics company known from viral videos of its dog-like quadrupeds.

Uber president Andrew Macdonald and Lyft CEO David Risher will for their part talk up schemes to fill the world's streets with robotaxis.

Fired in part by the generative AI surge, competition is heating up to dominate automated driving.

Uber has signed a partnership with chip developer Nvidia to upgrade tens of thousands of cars from different manufacturers with automation tech from 2027.

Waymo, a subsidiary of Google parent company Alphabet, has said its driverless vehicles will arrive in London from next year.

And several Chinese manufacturers including

Baidu and Pony.ai have Europe in their sights for an automated car rollout.

Brussels will make its presence felt at Web Summit by the presence of Henna Virkkunen, the European Commission's digital chief.

The 27-nation EU is increasingly fearful for its technological sovereignty as transatlantic trade and political tensions mount.

"We're more and more dependent, especially from the American hyperscalers" or major data centre operators, said Maya Noel, director-general of the France Digitale network of tech companies and investment firms.

She will tell attendees that European options are needed if the continent is to remain in control of its economy.

As the Commission pressures American and Chinese platforms to tighten protections for underage internet users, American games publisher Roblox - whose eponymous game is vastly popular with minors - will outline how it plans to verify players' ages. - AFP

EDUCATION

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Google to build AI hub on remote Australian island

SYDNEY: Google plans to build a large artificial intelligence (AI) data centre on Australia's remote Indian Ocean outpost of Christmas Island after signing a cloud deal with the Department of Defence earlier this year, according to documents reviewed by Reuters and interviews with officials.

Plans for the data centre on the tiny island located 350km south of Indonesia have not previously been reported, and many details including its projected size, cost and potential uses, remain secret.

However, military experts say such a facility would be a valuable asset on the island, which is increasingly seen by defence officials as a critical frontline in monitoring Chinese submarine and other naval activity in the Indian Ocean.

Google is in advanced talks to lease land near the island's airport to construct the data hub, including a deal with a local mining company to secure its energy needs, Christmas Island Shire officials told Reuters and council meeting records show.

Alphabet Inc.-owned Google said the project was part of its work to deliver subsea cable infrastructure to boost digital resilience in Australia and the Indo-Pacific, and played down its size.

"We are not constructing 'a large artificial intelligence data centre' on Christmas Island," a Google spokeswoman said in a statement to Reuters, adding more details would be shared soon.

Planning documents show Google proposes an "additional future cable system" connecting Christmas Island to Asia.

A Christmas Island source, who declined to be named, said Google had requested a long-term energy supply deal for a 7 megawatt data centre, using diesel and renewable power. Google did not comment about its power requirements.

Australia's Department of Infrastructure confirmed Google's proposal was to establish a data centre on Christmas Island and included plans to connect the island to Darwin via a subsea cable.

"The department is in discussions with

➤ The secretive project could bolster Canberra's digital and defence presence in the Indian Ocean

Google to ensure energy requirements for the proposed project are met without impacting supply to local residents and businesses," it said in a statement to Reuters.

Australia's Department of Defence had no comment.

A recent tabletop war game involving the Australian, US and Japanese militaries highlighted Christmas Island's role as a forward line of defence for Australia in any regional conflict, particularly its advantages for launching uncrewed weapons systems, or drones.

Bryan Clark, a former US Navy strategist who ran the war games, said having a forward "command and control" node on Christmas Island would be critical in a crisis with China or another adversary.

"The data centre is partly to allow you to do the kinds of AI-enabled command and control that you need to do in the future, especially if you rely on uncrewed systems for surveillance missions and targeting missions and even engagements," Clark, now a Hudson Institute fellow, told Reuters.

Subsea cables provide more bandwidth for communication than a satellite, and greater reliability, because China would be expected to jam satellite communications or Starlink in a crisis, he said.

"If you've got a data centre on Christmas, you can do a lot of that through cloud infrastructure," he added.

Australia's defence department entered into a three-year cloud agreement with Google in July. Britain's military recently announced a similar Google cloud deal, which it said will boost intelligence sharing with the US.

Google applied last month for Australian environmental approvals to build the first subsea cable connecting Christmas Island to the northern Australian city of Darwin, where the US Marine Corps are based for six months

of the year.

Christmas Island Shire President Steve Pereira said his administration is examining the community impact of the proposed data centre before giving final construction approval.

The 135 sq km island, best known for its asylum seeker detention centre and annual migration of millions of red crabs, has until recently struggled with poor telecommunications and its 1,600 residents lack job opportunities.

"There is support for it, providing this data centre actually does put back into the community with infrastructure, employment and adding economic value to the island," he said.

Residents are concerned at the impact the centre may have on energy supplies on the island, which is 1,500km from mainland Australia and relies on diesel to supplement limited renewables.

The Department of Infrastructure said the Google project aligned with the Australian government's goal of diversifying the island's economy away from mining.

"All environmental and other planning requirements will need to be met for the project to proceed," the spokesman said, noting the island's unique environment.

Two Christmas Island sources and a defence source said the data centre was of commercial benefit to Google because of the Indian Ocean location between Africa, Asia and Australia, as well as its potential defence uses.

Another recent war game on Christmas Island involved the rapid deployment of an advanced US HIMARS truck-mounted rocket system from Darwin, which drew a mixed response from residents.

Some anti-war protesters were fearful of the impact on tourism, while business people are hopeful increased defence activity will boost the economy, Pereira said. - Reuters

Goldman plans largest managing director promotions since 2021

NEW YORK: Wall Street lender Goldman Sachs will promote 638 executives to managing director next year, the highest number since 2021, a company memo said, as the bank benefits from a pickup in investment banking across the industry.

Goldman Sachs has been leading Wall Street's rankings for mergers and acquisitions as its fee volumes surged close to levels seen in 2021.

The Wall Street firm announces managing director promotions every two years, and the number of bankers being promoted this time around exceeds the 608 senior bankers it promoted two years ago. Of those promoted, 27% were women, which is lower than 31% in 2023.

"It's been really great in my seat in terms of the work that we do looking after the positioning performance and also the investment postures for our hedge fund clients based on our data," Vincent Lin, co-head of prime insights and analytics at Goldman, told Reuters. Lin was among the executives elevated to managing director in the latest round of promotions. "It's been great to use this opportunity, and the work that we do to connect with clients to guide them through turbulent times and also through calmer times," said Lin, adding that Goldman would look to expand its prime insights team globally across regions like Asia and Europe in the near term. More than 70% of the latest promotions come from revenue-generating businesses, but unlike previous years, Goldman did not break down how many came from global banking and markets or global asset and wealth units.

Goldman's managing director level is the last stop before executives are promoted to the bank's partnership. The latest round of promotions come as Wall Street bonuses are expected to rise for a second straight year for traders and investment bankers on surging deal volume and market volatility.

Goldman Sachs' main divisions have been headed by men since 2024, when Stephanie Cohen, then global head of platform solutions division, left the firm.

Among the latest promotions, 31% are Asian, 3% Black and 4% Hispanic or Latino, the memo from CEO David Solomon and president John Waldron said.

The bank beat Wall Street expectations for third-quarter profit, as its investment bankers earned higher advisory fees and rallying markets boosted revenue from managing client assets. - Reuters

Musk's US\$1 trillion Tesla pay deal wins shareholder backing

SAN FRANCISCO: Tesla CEO Elon Musk (pix) won shareholder approval on Thursday for the largest corporate pay package in history as investors endorsed his vision of morphing the EV maker into an AI and robotics juggernaut.

The proposal was approved with over 75% support, and Musk bounded to the stage of the company's annual meeting at its factory in Austin, Texas, accompanied by dancing robots.

Musk, already the world's richest person, could get as much as US\$1 trillion (RM4.2 trillion) in stock over the next decade, although required payments would take the value down to US\$878 billion.

The vote is crucial for Tesla's future and its valuation, which hangs on Musk's vision of making vehicles that drive themselves, creating a robotaxi network across the US and selling humanoid robots, even though his far-right political rhetoric has hurt the Tesla brand this year.

The board warned he could leave if he didn't get the pay package. While some investors said it was incredibly expensive and unnecessary, many saw it as a way to retain Musk and believe that the



goals set in the package ensured shareholders would be rewarded as well.

"What we are about to embark upon is not merely a new chapter of the future of Tesla, but a whole new book," Musk told a cheering group of shareholders.

He then made a string of promises on stage - from, in April, beginning production of the Cybercab, its 2-seater steering-less robotaxi, to unveiling its next-generation Roadster electric sports car. He also said Tesla would need "a gigantic chip fab" to make AI chips and should consider working with Intel.

Shareholders also re-elected three directors on Tesla's board, voted in favour of annual elections for all board members and approved a replacement pay plan for Musk's previous package that is held up in court.

"Other shareholder meetings are like snoozefests, but ours are bangers," Musk said. "I mean, look at this. This is sick."

Shareholders voted in favour of Tesla investing in Musk's artificial intelligence startup, xAI, though there were many abstentions. That could reflect

the hesitancy of big investors to bless the arrangement without stronger board oversight, said Jessica McDougall, partner at strategic and governance advisory firm Longacre Square.

Many investors, she said, would be "looking for the board to provide assurances and convictions that there are guardrails in place to be sure there's not too much mixing of businesses."

A win for Musk was widely expected as the billionaire was allowed to vote his roughly 15% stake after the automaker moved to Texas from Delaware. Excluding Musk's influence, the majority was small enough to warrant review of CEO pay by the board at a typical company, said Jessica Strine, CEO of shareholder advisory firm Jasper Street Partners. At Tesla, she said: "realistically there is not going to be such a review."

Some major investors had opposed the plan, including Norway's sovereign wealth fund, as did proxy firms Glass Lewis and Institutional Shareholder Services.

The vote allays investor concern that Musk's focus would turn to running his other companies, including rocket maker SpaceX and xAI.

The board and many investors who lent their endorsement have said the record-setting pay package benefits shareholders in the long run as Musk must ensure Tesla achieves a series of

milestones to get paid.

"If completed, these tranches of awarded shares follow strong improvements in revenue growth for Tesla," said Brian Mulberry, a senior client portfolio manager at Zacks Investment Management.

"Will the growth offset these concerns of dilution - or - is this just giving Elon his wish of enough influence to shape the future of AI? That remains to be seen."

Goals for Musk over the next decade include the company's delivering 20 million vehicles, having 1 million robotaxis in operation, selling 1 million robots and earning as much as US\$400 billion in core profit. But in order for him to get paid, Tesla's stock value has to rise in tandem, first to US\$2 trillion from the current US\$1.5 trillion, and all the way to US\$8.5 trillion.

Achieving each step - an operational goal and a valuation milestone - awards Musk 1% of stock. So the plan could still hand Musk tens of billions of dollars even if he falls short of most of its ambitious targets.

If Musk hits all of them, he would be eligible for 12% in stock, or about US\$1 trillion.

The net value of those shares would be US\$878 billion; the package is structured to exclude the value of the stock on the day the board passed the proposal in early September. - Reuters

TOP SHOTS OF THE WEEK



DOUBLE MILESTONE ... NCT Group of Companies on Thursday marked a significant double milestone - the launch of its maiden RM1 billion Sukuk Wakalah Programme, with Maybank participating in the first tranche up to RM390 million, and the groundbreaking ceremony for Phase 2 of its flagship NCT Smart Industrial Park held in Sepang, Selangor. From left: Malaysian Investment Development Authority (Mida) executive director Faizal Jalaludin, Kuala Langat Municipal Council president Mohd Hasy Nor Mohd, NCT Group founder and group managing director Datuk Seri Yap Ngan Choy, Selangor State Executive Councillor for Investment, Trade and Mobility Ng Sze Han, Kuala Langat District Officer Tengku Rohana Tengku Nawawi, NCT Group executive director Datuk Joe Yap Fook Choy and Mida director Sherulanuar Abdul Karim.



AWARD-WINNING ADVISER ... Malaysia's premier spacetech solutions provider Measat Global Bhd's adviser Balakrishnan Doraisamy was honoured with the 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award from the Asia Pacific Space Community Council (APSCC), in conjunction with the 26th Annual APSCC Space Conference and Exhibition in Taipei, Taiwan, on Tuesday. Balakrishnan (right) received the award from APSCC president Terry Bleakley. The APSCC is a non-profit international association representing all sectors of the satellite and space-related industries.



PIONEER COHORT ... Following Prime Minister Datuk' Seri Anwar Ibrahim's statement on the Malaysian Asean Business Entity (MyABE) at the Asean Capital Markets Forum International Conference on Thursday, the Securities Commission Malaysia (SC) announced the six companies in the first pilot MyABE cohort. Photo shows SC chairman Datuk Mohammad Faiz Azmi (sixth, left) and managing director Datin Paduka Azalina Adham (fifth, left) together with the MyABE six companies. The six are CIMB Group Holdings Bhd, IHH Healthcare Bhd and Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd in the MyABE-public listed companies category; and Aonic Sdn Bhd, MECIP Global Engineers Sdn Bhd and NSW Automation Sdn Bhd in the MyABE-mid-tier companies category.



SHIFT-ING TO KL ... Infobip Shift, a conference that gathers the global developer community, was held in Asia for the first time - in Kuala Lumpur. The conference held on Tuesday aimed to connect developers, startups and tech leaders across Southeast Asia. It was part of Cradle LIVE! Startup Asean Summit 2025, organised in partnership with Cradle Fund Sdn Bhd. From left: Infobip developer experience director Ivan Brezak Brkan, Cradle group CEO Norman Matthieu Vanhaecke and Infobip vice-president and general manager Apac and Eurasia Ruslana Reznikova.



UNDERWRITING DEAL ... Wasco Greenery Bhd on Tuesday signed an underwriting agreement with CIMB Investment Bank Bhd and Maybank Investment Bank Bhd for its initial public offering on the Main Market of Bursa Malaysia Securities. Greenery is expected to be listed in December. CIMB Investment Bank is the principal adviser and managing underwriter, while CIMB and Maybank Investment Bank serve as the joint bookrunners and joint underwriters. At the signing of the agreement are, from left, CIMB Investment Bank CEO, regional head, investment banking Nor Masliza Sulaiman; Wasco Greenery non-independent non-executive director Ramanathan PR Singaram and CEO Lee Yee Chong; and Maybank Investment Bank deputy CEO Tengku Ariff Azhar Tengku Mohamed.



FAST FLOW ... Touch 'n Go Sdn Bhd on Tuesday unveiled its next-generation open payment mobility ecosystem at MyARTTE 2025. The presentation featured Titan Flow, Touch 'n Go's own homegrown Multi-Lane Fast Flow platform, together with a range of digital innovations spanning tolling, parking, transit and corporate mobility. Works Minister Datuk Seri Alexander Nanta Linggi (right) holds the newly launched Touch 'n Go Business Card presented to him by Touch 'n Go CEO Praba Sangarajoo during his visit to the Touch 'n Go booth at Malaysia International Trade and Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur.



WARM WELCOME ... Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi arriving in Shanghai for a four-day working visit. — PIC COURTESY OF ZAHID HAMIDI FACEBOOK PAGE



ROYAL RAPPORT ... His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim meeting Saudi Arabia Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud at the Al-Yamamah Palace in Riyadh. — BERNAMAPIC



INFLATABLE ICONS ... Bird-shaped hot air balloons being displayed during the Tazaungdaing Lighting Festival in Taunggyi in Shan province, Myanmar. — AFPIC



VIBRANT VIGIL ... Devotees sit together with oil lamps to pray as they observe the Rakher Upobash Festival at a temple in Dhaka, Bangladesh. — REUTERSPIK



CABINET COURTESY ... Transport Minister Anthony Loke helping a disabled passenger board a bus during the Johor Bahru Bas.My launch event at the Sutera Mall Bus Terminal. — BERNAMAPIC



MONARCH MISSION ... His Majesty the King of Malaysia Sultan Ibrahim arriving in Riyadh for a visit to strengthen bilateral relations between Malaysia and Saudi Arabia. — BERNAMAPIC



RUBBLE RESPITE ... A Palestinian sits in an armchair next to the wreckage of destroyed buildings in Gaza City amid a ceasefire between Israel and Hamas. — REUTERSPIK



CRISP CROP ... Bariah Yaacob (left) and a fellow farmer harvesting lettuce grown using the hydroponic method under the Sejahtera Madani programme in Kampung Sri Kulim, Melor in Kelantan. — BERNAMAPIC



AUTOMATION ATTRACTION ... A robot walking among visitors during the autoMEX Penang exhibition at the Setia SPICE Convention Centre in Bayan Lepas. — BERNAMAPIC



PAST PRESENTATION ... Members of the Roodebrug Soerabaia Community and Re-enactor Indonesia take part in a portrayal of the Battle of Surabaya. — AFPIC



RESCUE RELIEF ... Residents navigating floodwaters on a boat following heavy rains in Vietnam. — AFPIC

Back to school... again: Parenting 101

EVERY night across Malaysia, thousands of parents sit at kitchen tables, hunched over open workbooks, pencils in hand, muttering, "What on earth is this question asking?"

We thought we had left school behind but it turns out, we have just enrolled again – this time under our children's names.

My son is in Primary Four, and like most parents I know, I've become a part-time student all over again. We are solving maths problems that look suspiciously like riddles, Googling grammar rules we once ignored and trying to remember if predicates were ever part of our syllabus.

The irony? Our kids seem unbothered. They are humming, doodling and casually asking, "Can you just tell me the answer, Ma?"

Homework hustle

Homework today is a team sport. There are colour-coded folders, QR codes and Google Classrooms that make you feel like you are managing a small corporation.

And then there is the parents' WhatsApp group – the true source of salvation and stress. By 8.15pm, the messages start flooding in: "Parents, teacher says must complete Exercise 4B tonight ah", "Where to find this worksheet? My son lost it again", "Can someone share the picture on page 27?"

By 8.30pm, someone uploads a photo of a perfectly done page. Within minutes, other parents start whispering to themselves, "Eh, ours looks very messy compared to that one..."

We laugh about it but the truth is no one wants their kid to be the one who forgot. Somewhere between laughter and panic, we all start double-checking pencil cases, erasers and moral values.

Age of hovering

Our generation of parents is unique; we

hover over homework, test marks, even over school uniform buttons.

We micromanage everything, not because we don't trust our kids, but because we don't trust ourselves to let go.

Most of us were raised by parents who didn't even know what homework we had. They just told us to finish it before watching Power Rangers. But now? We know every page, every deadline and every class quiz.

We call it "being involved". Sometimes, it is really just being anxious. We are afraid that they will fall behind in a world where everyone else's child seems to be two steps ahead – playing piano, learning coding, speaking Mandarin, joining robotics clubs. Even art competitions feel like Olympic qualifiers now.

And there is always that one parent who swears, "He did it all by himself."

Sure, aunty. Sure.

WhatsApp university

The parents' WhatsApp group deserves its own study in sociology.

One message, "Teacher says wear batik tomorrow!", can unleash chaos across the class. Suddenly, half the kids show up in batik, the other half in PE attire and by recess, the teacher clarifies: "Only prefects wear batik."

Too late. The group chat is already flooded with photos and mild regret. Still, we stay in those groups because they are also our lifeline, the only thing standing between us and forgotten art materials or "bring one egg tomorrow" notices that appear out of nowhere.

The chat keeps us sane, even if it's also the reason we lose our sanity.

The great Malaysian pressure

Somewhere along the way, parenting became performance art.

We want our kids to shine, not just in studies, but in everything. They must be confident, creative, articulate and



"Somewhere along the way, parenting became performance art. We want our kids to shine not just in studies but in everything. They must be confident, creative, articulate and resilient."



We are learning patience, restraint and when to close the red pen. We are learning to sit beside our kids without taking over the page.
– AI GENERATED IMAGE

resilient. Bonus points if they can do all that while eating vegetables and finishing homework on time.

We say we don't compare but, come on, we all do. One child wins a gold medal and suddenly, we are googling "best enrichment classes near me".

It is not just ambition; it is fear. Fear of being left behind in a system that keeps raising the bar.

All about love

Sometimes, after another long evening of worksheets, we catch ourselves thinking – maybe we are the ones being graded.

We sigh, erase, rewrite and pretend to stay calm but deep down, we all know this isn't just about academics; it's about love. It's about wanting the best, even when we are exhausted. We complain, we joke and we send memes in the chat but we also care deeply.

And every so often, there is a moment that makes it all worth it. Like when your child writes an essay that is wildly off-topic but full of imagination, and you think, "Maybe he's learning something more important than marks".

Real lesson

Maybe homework isn't the lesson – we are. We are learning patience, restraint and when to close the red pen. We are learning to sit beside our kids without taking over the page.

We are realising that it's okay if the spelling list has mistakes or the drawing isn't perfect.

Our kids will grow more from our calm than our corrections. Because one day, they will step into a world without WhatsApp reminders or parents proofreading their work, and hopefully, they will have the confidence to figure it out on their own.

So yes, we'll still peek into their bags at night (just in case) but maybe we can also laugh, breathe and let them own their messy handwriting and crooked charts. Because we are all learning together – parents and kids – one worksheet, one sigh and one WhatsApp message at a time.

After all, school never really ends for any of us.

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

COMMENT by Danny Kemp

Trump versus Mamdani: The newest showdown

DONALD Trump loves few things more than tackling a new political foe. But has he met his match in New York's incoming mayor Zohran Mamdani?

The mouthwatering showdown between the Republican and the young Democratic socialist could define the next phase of Trump's presidency.

Trump has appeared to relish having Mamdani as a foil, branding him a communist, mocking the name of the first Muslim and South Asian to lead America's largest city, and threatening to cut federal funding for New York City.

But his rival has shown he can play Trump at his own game.

It's rare for former reality TV star Trump to see himself upstaged, but 34-year-old Mamdani managed it at his victory rally on Tuesday night.

"Donald Trump, since I know you're watching, I have four words for you – turn the volume up!" he said to huge cheers.

White House Press Secretary Karoline Leavitt confirmed to reporters traveling with Trump on Air Force One the next day that the president had indeed watched Mamdani speak.

Go through all of us

Trump and Mamdani are, at least partly,

enemies with benefits.

Leftist Mamdani used Trump as a bogeyman throughout his mayoral campaign, accusing him of "fascism" and comparing the billionaire property developer to the landlords he says are ripping off New Yorkers.

He has also cannily positioned himself as part of the resistance to a president who has pushed his power to its limits and sent the National Guard into Democrat-run cities.

"To get to any of us, you will have to go through all of us," Mamdani said at the victory rally.

For hapless Democrats who have struggled to find a winning message as Trump has savaged them in recent months, Mamdani represents a long-awaited chance to fight back.

But for many on the right, Trump now has the ideal opponent to bash.

As Republicans nursed their wounds from defeats in New York, Virginia and New Jersey, Trump said in a speech in Miami on Wednesday that Americans now faced a "choice between communism and common sense."

Trump also blew a dog whistle to the hard-right.

"Mamdani, whatever the hell his name is," Trump said in the same

speech, deliberately mispronouncing Ugandan-born Mamdani's surname in the same way he did with his 2024 election rival Kamala Harris.

Flashing red lights

Yet the stakes are far higher than a war of words.

Trump has repeatedly threatened to put New York – his beloved home city – in the federal crosshairs, like he has previously with Los Angeles and Chicago.

"If he is a communist, there's not going to be a lot of activity," Trump told reporters in the Oval Office on Thursday. "So you wouldn't need bridges and tunnels and all the different things that were being planned for New York."

Some allies, meanwhile, fear Trump could be playing with fire by focusing on a man whose rise was propelled by the affordability crisis that is now hurting Republicans in the polls.

"There should be flashing red lights all over" for Trump, former White House strategy guru Steve Bannon told Politico. "People better understand they have a fight on their hands. This guy is a serious guy."

Both Trump and Mamdani have also indicated they may ultimately be ready



The mouthwatering showdown between the Republican and the young Democratic socialist could define the next phase of Trump's presidency.

– AFP/IC

to cool things off.

Trump has veered between saying he wants to "make him succeed" because he loves New York, and in the same breath, urging Mamdani to be "a little bit respectful of Washington."

And Mamdani will be aware that his campaign pledges of free city

bus travel, childcare and city-run grocery stores will struggle if Trump cuts federal funding.

"I continue to be interested in having a conversation with President Trump on the ways in which we can work together to serve New Yorkers," he said on Wednesday. – AFP



WEEKLY FOCUS

MONDAY

Technology and social media

TUESDAY

Family and parenting

WEDNESDAY

Fashion and beauty

THURSDAY

Home and living

FRIDAY

Travel and leisure

SATURDAY

Food and beverage

Yummy views

Dinner in the sky returns to Malaysia - P20



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How KL's famous Jake's Charbroil Steaks was born

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Clash of cooks at Lotus's Masak-Masak Ceria

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Amazonian chef refuses to create vegan menu



Main course: Braised Wagyu Ribs.



Starter: Pumpkin Cappuccino.



Diners will be suspended by crane 150ft above the ground.



Main course: Butter Poached Barramundi.



Main course: Smoky Chicken Leg Roulade.

AFTER 10 years since it first took Malaysia by storm, the iconic and world-renowned Dinner In The Sky Malaysia made its return on Wednesday, relaunched by Deputy Tourism, Arts and Culture Minister Datuk Khairul Firdaus Akbar Khan in a special ceremony attended by the media, invited guests and partners from the tourism industry.

In celebration of the recently launched Visit Malaysia Year 2026, this attraction once again gives Malaysians and international visitors the chance to dine 150ft above the ground, suspended by crane with a 360° view of Kuala Lumpur's stunning skyline.

Hosted at TREC Kuala Lumpur, this limited-time pop-up experience (running until the end of January 2026) features a curated three-course dinner prepared by Ceylon House, a member of the Cinnamon Group, one of Malaysia's leading names in upscale dining, set against glowing city lights. Guests are securely strapped into their seats on a rotating dining platform, ensuring everyone enjoys the best view in the sky.

Having begun its operations in May 2006 in Brussels, Belgium, this unique dining experience has successfully ran more than 10,000 sessions in over 70 cities around the world.

Dinner In The Sky Malaysia prioritises and observes the highest of safety standards. During the flight, guests will be wearing safety belts at all

Dinner In The Sky returns to Kuala Lumpur

➤ Three-course meal paired with incredible views

times, and attending staff will be fully equipped with safety harnesses to ensure their safety throughout their time in the air.

A safety supervisor will brief guests on safety regulations prior to the flight and will be in constant communication with the crane operator and ground crew for a smooth flight. All drawings, calculations and simulations have been tested and supervised by TUV SUD, the German organisation that validates the safety of products to protect people and the environment against hazards.

The Dinner in the Sky Malaysia experience is priced at RM399 nett per person and includes a one-hour dining experience in the sky, featuring a three-course meal along with free flow of cordial juice and water. There are two sessions daily - the KL Sunset session at 6.30pm and the KL City Lights session at 8pm. Guests must be 12 years old and above, based on their date of birth, and those under 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Opening week sessions are already sold out, with new reservations now open to the public.



Enjoy a selection of drinks.

TASTY RECIPE

Classic Tiramisu

A creamy dessert of espresso-soaked savoiardi biscuits surrounded by lightly sweetened whipped cream and a rich mascarpone, tiramisu relies heavily on the quality of its ingredients.

Serves: 10 persons

Ingredients

- ➔ 2 egg yolks
- ➔ 50g sugar
- ➔ 225g Emborg Mascarpone (room temperature)
- ➔ 450ml strong coffee (cold)
- ➔ 1 packet Savoiardi Biscuits ("lady fingers")
- ➔ 2 tbsp coffee liqueur (Amaretto or Frangelico)
- ➔ 1 tsp cocoa powder (for dusting)
- ➔ 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ➔ 200 ml Emborg Whipping Cream

Instructions

1. To make this classic tiramisu, whisk egg yolks with a whisk until creamy, then fold in Emborg Mascarpone and vanilla. Whisk until smooth.
2. In another mixing bowl, whip up Emborg Whipping Cream with sugar until soft peaks. Then fold into the mascarpone mixture.
3. Mix the coffee and coffee liqueur in a bowl.
4. Then, in a serving dish 8" x 8" / 20cm x 20cm, quickly dunk the biscuits into the coffee mixture and arrange into the dish, in a single layer.
5. Spread half of the mascarpone mixture on top, and then repeat with the biscuits again. Then layer with the remaining mascarpone mix.
6. Smooth the top evenly, then refrigerate for about 4-5 hours. It will be better overnight, so the flavours get to sink into the biscuits. Before serving, dust the top with cocoa powder.
7. Enjoy this Italian classic!





BY JOHN TAN

OWNING a restaurant has always been a dream of Cynthia De Alwis. Having come from a mixed-race family, the former Miss World Malaysia finalist was exposed to a variety of cuisines, gaining strong knowledge and passion for them.

"My father is Malaysian Sinhalese Thai and my mother is Chinese. She is Hakka and they are good with their food. My father as well, he was great with Southern Indian food. So, my siblings and I were in tune with different flavours," Cynthia told *theSun*.

The goal, however, took a while as Cynthia pursued other ventures. Apart from pageantry and modelling, the Malacca native worked in marketing for various food and beverage (F&B) brands, starting off as a merchandiser for regular jeans.

"I then moved to F&B, dealing with hoteliers and expats. My job was to work with them on sponsorship. So, I got to work in an environment that exposed me to food and beverages. Whether it was Western or Asian, I got to recognise the depth behind food."

Lingering aspiration

Through her job, Cynthia travelled to various countries and learned about the preparation behind cuisines. While she found it fulfilling, the passion to launch her own restaurant still lingered in her. Considering the nature of her job, it also felt like a natural transition.

"I thought to myself 'Why not?' I am exposed to these things and I love food. My family loves food. But I did not dare to start it. My husband, fortunately, gave me the encouragement to pursue it."

Along with the encouragement came advice to expect the worst, as he warned her of the potential difficulties. But together with him and her sister Joyce, Cynthia opened her first restaurant Jake's Charbroil Steaks in

Oven-roasted half spring chicken from Jake's Christmas menu.

Jake's is known for its quality charbroiled steaks.



Realising culinary dreams

» Cynthia De Alwis on establishing Jake's Charbroil Steaks

Medan Damansara.

Early days

That said, Cynthia maintained her job in marketing, balancing the two responsibilities with the help of Joyce. As things were still uncertain, Cynthia and her husband had to hold onto their day jobs to keep the restaurant afloat.

"We had to guarantee her that we were still able to provide her a paycheck if anything went wrong. My husband was very practical. That is why we kept our day jobs as we were calculated with our risk."

Yet, Cynthia was sure not to abandon her obligations, helping out Joyce after working hours. She would provide help with the menu, preparation of the food and even jockey duties.

So much so that customers would tip her RM50, not knowing that she is the owner.

When asked if the working dynamics affected their relationship, Cynthia noted the trio needed to learn to compromise with one another.

"We had to focus on our common ground, that is our love for food. We used to take matters from the boardroom to the bedroom. That was not good and it is quite common among family members who work together."

As for the newfound workload, Cynthia was determined to persevere despite how tiring and stressful things became.

"I told myself that 'I am going to work hard and let things fall on their own.' My parents always taught us to have discipline and hard work. That is what I have carried with me all these years. Even in bad and good times, I keep going."

Established presence

Fortunately, all of their effort paid off as Jake's Charbroil Steaks has grown tremendously since, gaining a reputation among Western food enthusiasts. The eatery is often frequented by locals for its quality steaks, prime cuts and seafood.

Jake's has also expanded throughout the years, earning three other siblings - Jake's Charbroil Steaks Langkawi, Casa Rosa and Casa Seventeen, all specialising in serving hearty Western flavours.

When prompted for advice, Cynthia urges aspiring restaurant owners to adopt a realistic approach when looking to start their own endeavour.

"You have to think of the worst-case scenario. Be sure to have a back-up plan. You also cannot go in and leave your own business. You have to know your business, know what is happening."



Cynthia (right) and Joyce are Jake's founders.

Finishing strong

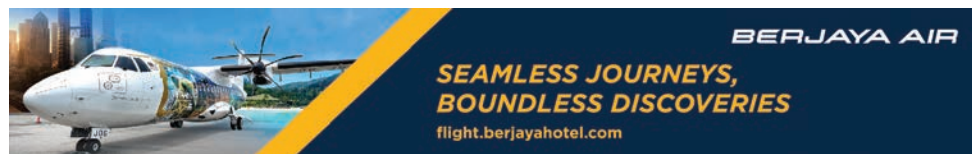
Regards to her upcoming plans, Cynthia aims to conclude the year with a grand Christmas and New Year's celebration. Together with her staff, she has been working hard to introduce Jake's new Christmas and New Year's menu.

In addition to its regular items, Jake's is offering exclusive items such as seared scallops, oven-roasted half spring chicken, lamb shank and NZ mussels with black olive and red peppers, as part of its Christmas and New Year's celebration.

Outside of her culinary goals, Cynthia hopes to go on more hiking adventures by the end of this year. Whether with friends or by herself, she would love to explore new hiking locations.



Jake's Charbroil Steaks is the first Jake's outlet. — ALL PICS COURTESY OF CYNTHIA DE ALWIS

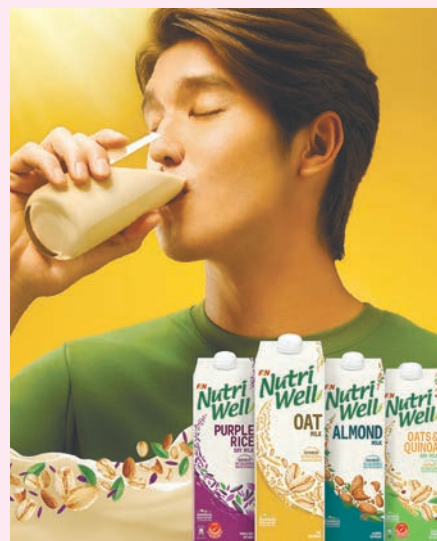


THIRST-QUENCHERS



Starbucks autumn comforts

Welcome the season with all-new autumn favourites at Starbucks, designed to warm your soul and satisfy every craving. The new maple cocoa nibs beverages feature a blend of shaken espresso or frappuccino with salted cocoa maple syrup for a perfectly balanced sweet-and-salty twist. Meanwhile, the honey glazed walnut beverages combine nutty richness and sweetness, topped with a satisfying crunch of honey-glazed walnuts for added texture. Making a much-awaited comeback, the iconic pumpkin spice latte brings the comforting flavours of pumpkin, cinnamon, nutmeg and clove in a cup that feels like a cozy autumn hug. These seasonal beverages make the perfect companion for chilly mornings or slow afternoons.



F&N Nutriwell beverages

F&N's Nutriwell line celebrates wholesome nutrition with drinks inspired by nature and supported by nutritional science. These beverages are cholesterol-free, contain no added preservatives, are a good source of calcium and are high in Vitamin D, making them a nourishing option for those seeking dairy-free alternatives. Flavours include oat milk, almond milk, oats and quinoa soy milk, and purple rice soy milk - each offering its own smooth, creamy texture and natural goodness. Perfect for breakfast, mid-day boosts or as part of a balanced lifestyle, Nutriwell combines wellness and taste in every sip.

Drinho Sparkling Tea Zero

Drinho reinvents tea with its bubbly new Sparkling Tea Zero, a guilt-free, refreshing twist on a classic favourite. With zero calories, sugar or colouring, this drink is a great suit for those seeking a lighter choice without sacrificing flavour. Available in two variants, salted lemon offers a zesty citrus kick balanced with subtle savoury notes, while rose lychee charms with its fruity, floral aroma and refreshing finish. Convenient and affordable, these are the ideal pick-me-up for workdays, picnics or post-meal refreshments.



Connor's Stout Porter Extra Malt

Connor's ups the ante with its new Stout Porter Extra Malt, brewed with a distinctive blend of four premium malts and an extra malt boost for deeper richness and flavour. At 5% ABV, it delivers a full-bodied yet smooth drinking experience, proving that a stout can be bold without being heavy. Crafted for social moments and shared enjoyment, it is the perfect companion for a night out or a relaxed evening in. With its malty aroma and satisfying finish, Connor's Extra Malt is made for bigger cheers and great company.



Delaffe pouch drinks

Delaffe introduces an exciting lineup of pouch drinks bursting with fruity flavours and cooling refreshment. The new Kiwi Ade packs a tangy, zesty kick, while Watermelon Ade delivers juicy sweetness that tastes like summer in a sip. Mango Ade brings a tropical punch of sweetness, and Peach Iced Tea offers a refreshing, calming blend perfect for any time of day. Easy to carry and ready to drink, Delaffe's pouches are made for Malaysians on the go who want flavour and freshness in every sip.



Nespresso Festive Collection

Limited edition flavoured blends, including The Festive Espresso for original and double espresso for vertuo, boasting an exquisite Arabica blend of African coffees from Rwanda, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Kenya. With an aromatic symphony of cereal and fruity notes, enhanced by delicate woody and caramel undertones, these blends can be enjoyed on its own or as a latte macchiato. The sweet almond and hibiscus flavoured coffee captures the delightful flavour of almond followed by a floral aftertaste of hibiscus. Feel free to enchant your senses with the cinnamon and candied tamarind flavoured coffee which serves a harmonious blend that embodies the essence of the season.



Somersby Mango & Lime Cider

Somersby's latest creation, Mango & Lime Cider, brings together the luscious sweetness of tropical mangoes with a zesty burst of lime for an irresistibly refreshing combination. This new flavour offers a tropical escape in every sip, perfect for relaxing with friends or unwinding after a long day. Light, crisp and bursting with carefree energy, this vibrant cider is ideal for sunny afternoons, casual gatherings or anytime you need a taste of the tropics.

Tea Thambi

Founded with a passion for authentic Indian flavours and a love for timeless tradition, Tea Thambi is a specialty beverage brand that celebrates the rich heritage of Indian masala tea. Tea Thambi serves spiced masala tea that is an instant comfort cure for people missing India, weathering a cold or simply craving some really good Indian flavours. Alternative servings of ginger tea and black coffee are also available for those who seek a refreshing midday pick-me-up.



BE IT in home kitchens or professional settings, Lotus's Malaysia continues to play a role in the country's evolving food scene.

The retailer recently held its first Masak-Masak Ceria competition, a two-day event split between Nov 1 and Nov 2 that brought together professional chefs and young culinary talents looking to perform.

Jointly organised by Lotus Malaysia, the Professional Culinaire Association and TAEM Academy, the competition featured 24 participants in both Professional and Young Chef categories, selected from more than 120 entries nationwide - reflecting the range and diversity of Malaysia's culinary talent.

Two days of relentless competing later, the winners were announced: Muhammad Syafiq Syahmi Saidon won the Professional Category and Ahmad Wafi Rosli took home the Young Chef title.

The top three winners in the Professional Category, chefs Syafiq, Leo Wong and Yuventhiran Pillai, will be representing Malaysia at the Thailand Ultimate Chef Challenge 2026 in Bangkok. The regional event, endorsed by the World Association of Chefs' Societies, offers participants the opportunity to compete for the Global Culinary Certificate, a recognition of international culinary expertise.

Each champion received RM3,000 in Lotus's cash vouchers, while the top three professional winners will advance to the Bangkok competition.

Lotus's customer and marketing director Deon Lee said the company provides a platform for chefs to express their creativity and passion for food.

Lotus's Malaysia presents Masak-Masak Ceria

➤ Champions receive RM3,000 in cash vouchers



Syafiq in action for his winning dish at Masak-Masak Ceria 2025.



Ahmad (left) with Lotus Malaysia's customer and marketing executive director Nuathip Pituckpongsatorn.

"Lotus's has always been a trusted partner that understands the unique needs of both professional chefs and home cooks. We support Malaysia's culinary identity and provide opportunities for local talents to grow," she said.

The judging panel included

renowned chefs KK Yau, Bob Adnin, Amy Beh and Arief Khalid, who evaluated participants on creativity, taste and presentation. Yau, who is Asia's vice continental director of Worldchefs, said Masak-Masak Ceria has set a new benchmark for local culinary competitions.

"Lotus's Masak-Masak Ceria provides a valuable platform for both young and professional chefs to push their boundaries and gain international exposure," he said.

Building on the success of the competition, Lotus's plans to continue supporting Malaysia's

culinary community by creating more opportunities for chefs and aspiring talents to showcase their abilities. The company also operates five hybrid stores that serve both business and household customers in Puchong, Shah Alam, Jitra, Sungai Dua and Desa Tebrau.



The top three winners of Lotus's Masak-Masak Ceria Professional category pictured with Lotus Malaysia's executive committee members.



The panel of judges for Lotus's Masak-Masak Ceria (from left): Chefs Yau, Bob, Beh and Arief.

Malaysian fine-dining scene making big memories

EVIAN recently presented an extraordinary dining experience at Terra Dining, Kuala Lumpur, uniting the founder of Terra Dining YC Chong and Evian's chef ambassador Arnaud Dunand Sauthier.

Held on Oct 29 and 30, the sold-out, four-hands collaboration marked Terra Dining's first guest chef event a milestone in Malaysia's evolving fine-dining scene, that celebrated a shared philosophy of balance, originality and artistry.

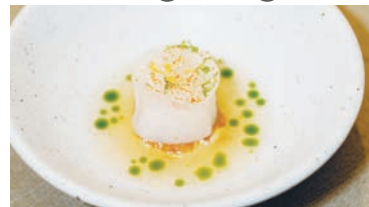
Chong, known for his reinterpretation of Malaysian terroir, curated a menu that wove together land, sea and seasonality with quiet sophistication. His approach at the restaurant has always placed strong emphasis on beverage pairing, alternating between wine, tea and water as part of the dining rhythm.

"At Terra, beverages are part of the flow. Each pairing carries the guest from one dish to the next. Evian represents that balance and continuity. Its clarity complements the flavours we craft and contributes to the experience feeling complete," said Chong.

Sauthier brought his signature finesse and depth to



Scallion puff pastry and duck



Coral grouper, radish and lemongrass.



Forest mushroom, roe and dashi.

the collaboration, by combining his French culinary foundations with the bright, aromatic nuances of Thai ingredients, a hallmark of his Michelin-starred restaurant Maison Dunand.

"I've always believed that harmony comes from contrast. This collaboration allowed us to explore that idea by creating a melting pot for Malaysia's vibrant ingredients, Chong's sensitivity to flavour and my own techniques rooted in France and shaped by Thailand. It was a real conversation between our worlds," said Sauthier.

While rooted in different culinary traditions, both chefs share a respect for the integrity of ingredients

and the emotional rhythm of a meal.

The dining experience took the guests on a sensory journey that balanced Malaysia's raw, grounded flavours with the refined elegance of French-Thai craftsmanship, all carried through the purity and subtlety of Evian mineral water.

Each course reflected the duo's attention to detail and harmony of textures, from delicate seafood preparations to expressive reinterpretations of local produce. Together, Chong and Sauthier demonstrated how cuisine can transcend geography while remaining true to identity, making the event a memorable one for Malaysia's fine-dining scene.



Pai tee, bonito tartare, guava and ensabi.



SAULO JENNINGS, a chef from the Amazons, is zealous enough about the flavours of the rainforest to refuse to cater a vegan dinner at an environmental awards ceremony hosted by Britain's Prince William.

The 47-year-old chef is, however, ready to impress heads of states at the COP30 meeting in the Amazon this week with an immersive dinner, showcasing both plant and animal ingredients from the world's largest rainforest.

Jennings was appointed a UN gastronomy ambassador in 2024 and has cooked for presidents, diplomats and even Mariah Carey.

Born and raised on the banks of the Tapajos River in northern Brazil, where he opened the first of his six restaurants 16 years ago, Jennings told AFP that sustainability, to him, is about balance.

Why did you decide not to cook for Prince William and 700 guests at the Earthshot Awards dinner in Rio de Janeiro this week?

"The request I received was to create a 100% vegan menu, and I explained that I didn't feel comfortable signing off on such a menu because my work is precisely about showing that the Amazon is sustainable, and this includes the fish.

"I even suggested making a predominantly plant based Amazonian menu which includes sustainably managed fish, but it wasn't accepted. As far as I know, a vegan menu wasn't a requirement of the royal family."

Earthshot has declined to comment on the matter.

Veganism has become synonymous with ethical eating, what do you make of this?

"I respect the lifestyle choices of others. But I think it's dangerous to equate veganism with sustainability. Both these schools of thought are pertaining to different things. The forest is a balanced ecosystem, it keeps people, animals and plants living together. I worry that veganism would become a cultural imposition and damage the natural balance of the ecosystem.

"The people of the Amazon practise a variety of diets without identifying with any one

Is veganism sustainable?

➤ Amazonian chef explains why he refused to cook for Prince William event



Jennings poses at one of his restaurant in Belem, Para, Brazil. – ALL PICS FROM AFP

specifically. We eat what the forest gives us. This relationship with food is ancestral."

Initially some classic local dishes such as Acai, the Indigenous Manicoba stew and mouth-numbing soup Tacaca, were banned from the COP30 menu over fears of

contamination. What did you think about that?
"I was the first to question the matter along with Brazilian minister of tourism, and we managed to get a correction made to the bidding process. It would be absurd for the whole world to come and see the Amazon and for us not to be able to serve our own food.

"Many people from outside are still afraid of our food, and end up ordering chicken or turkey, when they could eat pirarucu (an Amazonian freshwater fish that can grow up to three meters long), which is noble, flavourful and sustainable."

What Amazonian flavours are you bringing to COP30?

"The basis of everything for me is cassava... But, I also love working with Brazil nuts, Jambu (a herb which creates a tingling sensation in the mouth), Melipona honey (from stingless bees), butter beans, pumpkin, banana, black tucupi (made from fermented and boiled Manioc juice) and Marajo cheese (made from the milk of water buffalos). At COP, I want the world to taste these flavours and understand that the forest also speaks through food."

Do you see Amazonian cuisine as a conservation tool?

"Absolutely. Cuisine is one of the most direct ways to protect the forest. When you consume sustainably managed fish, artisanal flour or real tucupi, you are helping a chain that keeps people on the riverbank and prevents deforestation. Amazonian food is a political act of conservation."

What has influenced your relationship with food?

"I am the descendant of the people who live off this land. Food for me is memory, it is resistance, and it is the most beautiful way to tell anyone who we are. When we talk about the Amazon, many still think it's just exoticism and don't understand that the culture of the forest is steeped in science, technique, and tradition. My dream is to see a pirarucu dish being served with the same prestige as a Peruvian ceviche or an Italian pasta."

Fine dining made easy for homecooks looking to dazzle at all costs

SEVERAL times crowned the best restaurant in the world, Noma, a beacon of gastronomy in Copenhagen, wants to carve a niche among home cooks by selling those newly dabbling in cooking some of its products.

The move was partially inspired by the difficulties the restaurant experienced during the Covid crisis.

"It is important that we are opening up to more than just 70 guests at a time," Noma Projects creative director Thomas Frebel told AFP.

"Since I started in 2009... we were thinking, 'Imagine you could buy this in a store,'" said Frebel, who works with chef and co-owner of the restaurant Rene Redzepi.

An acronym formed from the Danish words *nordisk* (Nordic) and *mad* (food), Noma first opened on a quay in central Copenhagen in 2003.

It closed in 2016 and reopened two years later in a slightly more remote neighbourhood of the Danish capital.

Today, a dinner menu at the prestigious establishment costs 4,400 kroner (RM1,800) per person, plus 2,100 kroner for a wine pairing or 1,600 for juice.

Because Covid forced it to close its doors temporarily, "there was a moment where we said: 'OK, we need to change the way we operate and the way we are depending on only the guests having to walk through our doors,'" Frebel recalled.



Aged Pumpkin Vinegar, one of the many products at Noma's new Projects Shop.

Signature products

Even before the pandemic, the restaurant – which holds three Michelin stars – had experimented with residencies in London and Sydney.

Now, however, it wants to spread its products outside its own kitchens.

The Noma "touch" owes much to fermentation – which can even render pine edible – and its sophisticated broths.

So, the establishment decided to put the flavours of its fermentation lab and test kitchen in bottles and start selling the products online and in its store, located in a greenhouse right in front of the fabled restaurant.

Some available products are wild rose vinegar, pumpkin-seed praline spread and mushroom cooking sauce.

Six months of fermentation

At the store, visitors can have a coffee and taste the products.

"The new venture is exciting and I feel like they're making Noma more accessible," Stephen Velasco, an American who has been living in Copenhagen for 32 years said.

"We hope our products reach a greater audience in the future and enter many more home kitchens than just one little kitchen here," said Frebel.

"I love that you can just walk in from the street and have a gastronomic experience. But the purchases would have to wait until we have more money," said Agata Seferynska, a Polish student who came window-shopping with a friend.

"Our prices are justified because everything is made by hand. Some of



Inside Noma's Projects Shop in Copenhagen, Denmark.



Coffee, tasting and unhurried purchases make the vibe at Noma's Projects Shop.

the sauces need to be fermented for over six months," Frebel said.

In early 2026, Noma will relocate to Los Angeles for a few months. It plans

to shutter the restaurant until after the American expedition, but the store in Copenhagen will remain open.



Abrams blends raw emotion with delicate pop melodies.



Abrams is the daughter of famed US director JJ Abrams.

GRACIE ABRAMS'S second studio album *The Secret of Us* has been a standout on the charts since its debut, with *The Secret of Us (Deluxe Edition)* landing on the overall charts of more than 150 countries on Apple Music, reaching first overall in 23 countries.

The album's viral single *That's So True* catapulted to the top of the charts, reaching first on Apple Music overall in 10 different countries. On Nov 12 last year, shortly after its release, the hit single was the first overall song in eight countries.

Also, Abrams's top song on Shazam, *That's So True*, spent almost a full year on the Shazam global top 200, peaking at third globally at the end of 2024.

"Because of the times we're living in, it feels really obvious when there is true light, and that's what was so life-changing about this tour. Obviously, touring feels like training, and the cool thing that I'm learning now after this long stretch being back in the studio again is, you actually can apply these skills. It both informs the other. But really more than anything else, it's the thing that I'm carrying from all the shows that we were lucky enough to play this year, is the kind of unabashed joy from the audience," said Abrams in an interview with Apple Music's Zane Lowe.

Music being bringing people together

The storytelling element of this whole thing that we all get to do, even down to the conversations we're having, I think music is... That's where I'm finding such value in it right now at this point. I always have, but I think it's pretty important to remember that at these shows, for example, I may have written the song that we're all singing, but that song is no longer about me at all as soon as we're all there, you know what I mean, because the way that people physically lean in.

Reflecting on *The Secret of Us* and how she feels now

I feel very much like, I think because the album cycle is done now, and this is the third week being off the road where I'm starting to have... Slowing down physically is aiding the process to just literally process all of what it was. I do think, yes, I guess in short... Yes, that was an exact kind of representation of where I was at then. That felt really true, and I felt like that was true for the writing process of the album, and I do have this experience, and I always wonder if other artistes of all forms feel this way when they say the thing they are trying to say and it's done, and it's on paper.

To me, I'm like, "Okay. Next." And so, it's funny with music that you're then, for a year and a half after the fact, really still living in those stories. I love that the stories that I got to live in for the past year were ones that, obviously in the ways that you've said, did change so much, and also other things not at all in that Audrey and I made so much of the album together. Aaron (Dessner) and I made the whole album together. These are dear friends.

And memories. That's the thing. Anytime I feel like whenever I'm not tapped in directly to someone in the audience and seeing the

Secrets of Gracie Abrams

➤ Singer-songwriter talks about creative process, touring



Abrams says touring feels like training. — ALL PICS FROM APPLE MUSIC

experience they're having and guessing things about their relationships based on the lyrics that they're really emphasising or whatever, if I'm not there, I will be thinking of like, "Ah, that was a great day at Long Pond," or "Audrey (Hoebert) and I cried through that one," or whatever the thing is.

Contrasting brightness of *The Secret of Us* to her inner darkness

It's happy. It's interesting. *The Secret of Us* is, it's very bright sounding often. Obviously, most of the songs are strummers. There's something about the whole thing that is brighter than I... Yes, it was, I think, a very well-concentrated version of the time period we were writing about. I also know for a fact that there's a kind of extroverted quality in the album that is very much brought out historically by my relationship with (Hoebert).

Our friendship has always activated this side of my personality that, around other people, it isn't turned on in the same way. And so, for us to have a handful of months where we would weave in and out of songs, to then hear that sort of in the music was super interesting, because the reality of who I am is a bit darker than how the album sounds, I suppose, if that makes sense. And so, that's something I just know to be true. And so,

when you're out touring, life is happening every day between shows, offstage and then you get on stage, and sometimes it can feel harder to access that place, even if the lyrical content is a little darker, sadder or whatever. There's something even just about the sound and the way that it feels, and it kind of resonates.

And it can feel challenging to be like, "I believe me." But when I'm seeing other people do it, that is what makes me feel...

Writing *I Told You Things* and her unreleased track *Death Wish*

I've been writing alone a lot, and there's parts of yourself... Again, people bring out different qualities in all of us, and it's exciting to me to see how that is reflected in how things sound. I think *Death Wish*, even the deluxe songs on this album, aside from *That's So True*, which, again, sort of totally makes sense within the context of the other songs, it feels very much like (Hoebert) and I together.

But *I Told You Things*, which is, I think, my favourite song on the album and also my favourite moment in the show, that song and *Death Wish*. It's interesting making all the things that we're making now. Those two songs have been such clues ultimately into what this next chapter feels like, and I am enjoying it very much, because it feels like a

returning to the feelings that I know have historically compelled me to write songs.

Evolving her sound

I'm having an interesting few weeks where I'm just like, "Okay. XYZ actually did not suit me," even though I thought it might and a lot of other people thought it would. I'm like, "That doesn't actually feel like me." And it's that weird thing, I think, when you're being perceived at all. Again, we all have this, regardless of if you're doing something public-facing or not. It's like, people in your life are looking at you. People make assumptions about you all the time, and I think it can feel intimidating or odd to try to authentically evolve into the person. You can feel it bubbling under your skin a little bit, and I'm having a nice time right now translating that into music that I do think feels very different from *The Secret of Us*.

Jumping right back into writing after her tour and what is compelling her to create right now

This feels to me like the thing that when I was... Yeah. You know when you're just compelled? You're like, "I have to, because I feel a little bit 'uneasy' or 'I feel like this one feeling is really loud to me'," which probably means I need to write about it in order to kind of process it more, because that's just the way that I have operated.

Right now, it feels like a response to being a person on the planet when the tone is what it is. It feels like being like, yes, totally kind of grappling with the parts of getting a lot of what you've been working for and it not sitting right always with you. Yeah. I'm trying to just metabolise all of it, I suppose, at the moment, and it feels really nice to start to say it, because I think you... It's also being 26 and loving the work that I get to do so much, and also having an imagination for more.

Being in that weird place where it's like, "I don't want to have kids right now", but one day, I so want that. Do you know what I mean? There's this in-between feeling, knowing how young I am, and also feeling like I'm starting to really... What I've learned from the people I trust and love and artistes who I respect and admire and study, it feels like it's just beginning to come into focus in a way where I feel less frantic or restless about having to do anything about it. I'm kind of like, "I can hear all of these voices and know that that doesn't mean I need to react to something right now."

And yes, obviously, it's like what you were saying. It's right off tour into the studio, but that's not... It's because I want to just... I don't want to go back on tour right now. I don't want to go back on tour tomorrow. I want to just start to try to articulate all of this and be super patient. I have no idea when it will... I have no idea. I just know that it feels really nice to start to understand the past year.



SCAN ME

BINGE-WORTHY FLICKS



Love is for the Dogs

Cast: Kaya Kiyohara

A kind-hearted divorce lawyer and a young veterinarian are unexpectedly brought together by their dogs' instant connection. As their pets' romance blooms, so do their feelings for each other – until a charming

Korean corporate heir arrives and soon complicates their new relationship. Streaming on HBO Max.



Weapons

Cast: Josh Brolin, Julia Garner, Alden Ehrenreich, Austin Abrams

Horror thriller *Weapons* has made its global streaming debut on HBO Max. When all but one child from the same class mysteriously vanish on the same night at 2.17am, a

community is left questioning who or what is behind their disappearance. Zach Cregger directs from his own screenplay and also produces alongside Roy Lee, Miri Yoon, J.D. Lifshitz and Raphael Margules, with Michelle Morrissey and Brolin executive producing.



La Grande Maison Tokyo Special

Cast: Takuta Kimura, Ikki Sawamura, Aki Asakura

In this special, Michelin-starred chef Hayami's business, previously in partnership with chef Natsuki Obana, is challenged with the severe impact caused by

the Covid-19 pandemic. While visiting a restaurant in Kyoto, rumoured to soon be nominated as the world's best French restaurant, she becomes convinced that Obana has returned to Japan. Streaming on HBO Max.



Prehistoric Planet: Ice Age

Cast: Tom Hiddleston

The new five-part natural history event series, narrated by Hiddleston, premieres globally on Nov 26. *Prehistoric Planet: Ice Age* takes viewers millions of years beyond the extinction of the dinosaurs into a world shaped by ice, survival and the emergence of a new group of giants – the iconic megafauna. Unlike its modern cousins, this Ice Age relative could climb rocky slopes with ease, using powerful limbs and massive claws to reach sparse vegetation. During this period, sloths thrived in a wide variety of forms, from giant ground-dwellers to smaller, tree-dwelling species.



Shrinking season three

Cast: Jason Segel, Harrison Ford
Created by Emmy Award winners Bill Lawrence and Brett Goldstein alongside Segel, *Shrinking* season three will premiere globally with a one-hour premiere episode on Jan 28, 2026 on Apple TV, followed by one new episode weekly, every Wednesday until

April 8, 2026. The series follows a grieving therapist (played by Segel) who starts to break the rules and tell his clients exactly what he thinks. Ignoring his training and ethics, he finds himself making huge, tumultuous changes to people's lives... including his own.



Dear X

Cast: Kim You-jung, Kim Young-dae
Now streaming on HBO Max, this 12-episode Korean romance thriller drama series from Tving is adapted from the popular, award-winning Naver Webtoon of the same name, written by Van Zi-un. *Dear X* tells the story of Baek Ah Jin (played by You-jung), a successful actress who hides her history of trauma and rises to the top through manipulation and deception, protected at all costs by her love interest Yoon Jun Seo (played by Young-dae).



I am Boxer

Cast: Don Lee, Dex, Kim Jong-kook
This Nov 21, end the year with a knockout blow with *I Am Boxer* – a new boxing competition series from *Eternals* star Lee and the creators of *Physical: 100* on Disney+. A reality show that packs a punch, *I am Boxer* will follow 90 boxing hopefuls across a range of ages and weight classes as they compete in a series of challenges to become Korea's next boxing icon. Featuring a wealth of Korean celebrities, comedians, boxing amateurs and more, the series will also feature guest appearances from some of the biggest names in the fight game.



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INSIDE EDGE

India take 2-1 lead in T20 series

INDIA took a 2-1 lead in their T20 series against Australia with a 48-run demolition of the home side on Queensland's Gold Coast yesterday.

After losing the toss and being sent in to bat, India reached 167-8 thanks to a well-made 46 from Shubman Gill and useful contributions from Abhishek Sharma (28) and Shivam Dube (22).

India's bowlers then took centre stage, bundling Australia out for 119, with off-spinner Washington Sundar taking 3-3 in just eight balls to finish off the match.

"I thought 167 was par on that wicket," Australian captain Mitchell Marsh said.

"But batting was pretty hard - we had a few partnerships but we just couldn't get the big one that would give us momentum going into the back end of the innings."

India would have gone into the innings break hoping for a bigger score than 167 but the total proved too much for the Australians, who started brightly but fell away alarmingly after reaching 67-1 in the ninth over.

The visitors will now head to Brisbane tomorrow hoping to clinch the five-match series after the opening game in Canberra was washed out.

"I think the bowlers did really well," India captain Suryakumar Yadav said. "There was a little bit of dew but they adapted really quickly."

"I think the combination (of our bowlers) suits us really well and bowling a side out is what we want from them," he said.



De Kock ton downs Pakistan

QUINTON DE KOCK (pic) hit a brilliant century and Nandre Burger grabbed four wickets as South Africa thumped Pakistan by eight wickets in their second one-day international yesterday.

Playing his second ODI after reversing his 2023 decision to retire from the format, the dashing De Kock smashed an unbeaten 123 to anchor a 270-run

chase with 9.5 overs in spare at Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad. South African victory levelled the three-match series at 1-1 after Pakistan won the first match by two wickets. The third and final match is today, all in Faisalabad.

"I set myself high goals so I am happy to bat well today," said De Kock. "I think Nandre (Burger) set us well with early wickets and then we batted well to chase that down."

Earlier, South African fast bowler Burger registered his best ODI figures of 4-46 to keep the home team down to 269-9.

The 30-year-old ripped out Pakistan's first three wickets in his opening three overs after the hosts won the toss and batted.

From 22-3, however, the hosts rebuilt the innings and half-centuries from opener Saim Ayub and Salman Agha, who added 92 for the fourth wicket, and later from Nawaz helped them to a fighting total.

Saim hit 53 off 66 balls with a six and five fours, while Salman made a more docile 69 from 106 deliveries with five boundaries as the pair revived the innings.

"I think we put up a good total but did not bowl and field well," said Shaheen Shah Afridi. "We will come back strongly."

Chapman leads Black Caps over Windies

POWERFUL batting by Black Cap Mark Chapman carried New Zealand to a three-run victory in the second T20 against West Indies in Auckland yesterday.

Chapman blitzed 78 from just 28 balls as New Zealand made 207-5 batting first at Eden Park, but brilliant power hitting from Romario Shepherd, Rovman Powell and Matthew Forde almost brought West Indies home.

Forde needed a boundary from the final ball to secure at least a tie, but could only manage a single. The five-match series is level at 1-1.

West Indies captain Shai Hope won the toss and chose to field and New Zealand struggled to 81-2 after 12 overs. But then the timing fell into place and Chapman scored 66 runs from his next 19 balls.

He blasted seven sixes and six fours, with three of the next four overs hit for more than 20 runs.

West Indies conceded 126 runs from the last eight overs of the innings, Daryl Mitchell making 28 from 14 and captain Mitchell Santner 18 from 8.

Ish Sodhi, back in the New Zealand side in place of James Neesham, took two wickets in his first two overs, leaving West Indies on 71-3 at the halfway stage.

Powell and Shepherd then put the visitors back on track, Shepherd hammering 34 from 16 balls and Powell blasting 45 from the same number of deliveries.

Forde also belted 29 from 13 balls in the closing overs. Sodhi ended with 3-39 and Santner took 3-31.

FOCAL PARK SDN BHD (358698-H) NOTIS LELONG AWAM KENDERAAN UNTUK DILELONG SEPERTI SEDIA ADA

TEMPAT & TARIKH LELONG : Northern Region (Alor Setar, Butterworth & Ipoh) 13-11-2025 (Khamis) Pukul 11:00pagi
TARIKH MELIHAT : SEBELUM TIGA HARI LELONG (Pukul 9:00pagi - 4:00petang)
PERTANYAAN (Tel): Butterworth 04-3567972, Alor Setar 04-787 7972, Ipoh 05-5293971

FPAC - PELELONG BERLESEN : a) Mr. Chew Wooki Kok, b) Mr. Steven Lim Peng Seng (02097), c) Pn Hasniza Binti Abu Samah (01038)

Alamat : 352, Permatang Tok Jaya Maklom Sg Dua 13800 Butterworth. : Lot 138-A, Batu 5 Jalan Langgar 05460 Alor Setar : PT51683, Jalan Jelapang, Kws Perindustrian Tmn Meru 30020 Ipoh

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Item	Reg No	Jenis & Model	Tahun
AM1	WNX1733	HONDA CITY 1.5 VTEC (A)	2006
AM2	NBOS8778 (QDC8395)	MERCEDES BENZ E350E	2017
AM3	AHH4294	NISSAN SENTRA Comfort (A) 1.6i (Impul)	2010
AM4	WWK7219	NISSAN X-TRAIL LUXURY (A) 2.0i	2004
AM5	AKW9077	PERODUA BEZZA 1.3	2018
AM6	WSH1488	PERODUA MYVI 1.3	2009
AM7	AKW8646	PROTON ERTIGA 1.4 AT EXECUTIVE PLUS	2017
AM8	WC6428L	PROTON PERSONA 1.6	2015
AM9	CEF2647	PROTON SAGA 1.3 (M)	2020
AM10	AEL3591	PROTON WIRA 1.3GL	2001
AM11	VAG7863	VOLKSWAGEN PASSAT 1.8 CKD	2017
AM12	JTK5428	PROTON IRIZ 1.6	2019
AM13	AGV172	SUZUKI - S CROSS CVT	2014
AM14	WNB3001	TOYOTA VIOS 1.5	2005
AM15	BHF83	TOYOTA WISH 1.8	2004
AM16	VAN7243	TOYOTA VIOS 1.5	2017

(Perhatian: Kenderaan-kenderaan diatas yang tidak dibida dalam perolehan akan dilelong semula pada 20-11-2025)



FEDERAL TERRITORY (PLANNING ACT) 1982 (AKTA 267) FEDERAL TERRITORY (PLANNING) (APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION) (FEDERAL TERRITORY OF KUALA LUMPUR) RULES 2025 RULE 3

NOTICE TO OBTAIN VIEWS

The Mayor has received an application for the proposed to demolish a 1-storey commercial building and reconstruct a 14-storey hotel comprising 1 basement level for mechanical service areas, 1 main lobby floor with commercial and mechanical service spaces, 2 floors of car parking, and 10 hotel floors including facility areas and mechanical service spaces with a Plot Ratio 1:7.26 on Lot 1222, Section 67, Jalan Barat, Imbi Bandar Kuala Lumpur.

(Ref: DBKL.JPRB.856/64)

Pursuant to the provisions of Rule 3, Federal Territory (Planning) (Application For Planning Permission) (Federal Territory Of Kuala Lumpur) Rules 2025, the Mayor grants the registered landowners in the surrounding area a chance to submit their views towards this application.

If any registered land owners in the surrounding area decides to do so, they are required to submit in writing their views towards this application addressed to the Pengarah, Jabatan Perancangan Bandaraya, Tingkat 9, Menara DBKL 1, Jalan Raja Laut, 50350 Kuala Lumpur and through email: jprb@dbkl.gov.my.

These views shall be submitted within two (2) weeks from the date of publication of this notification, clearly stating the name of the owner, lot number, local postal address, and DBKL reference number.

Date: 8th NOVEMBER 2025

DATUK BANDAR KUALA LUMPUR

MAX VERSTAPPEN said he had no pressure and nothing to lose as he seeks to close the gap in the Formula One title battle with McLaren's front-running favourites Lando Norris and Oscar Piastri.

Speaking to reporters at the Sao Paulo Grand Prix, Red Bull's reigning champion said he would need some luck to slash the 36-point deficit to Norris but he would be going "all-in" to try and do it.

McLaren's Norris is one point clear of his Australian teammate Piastri with four rounds, and two sprint races, remaining.

Verstappen had looked out of the running at the end of August, when he was 104 points behind then-leader Piastri, but he has roared back into contention and taken three wins in the last five races.

Verstappen ready to Max it out

He has spoken of the need for perfection in the remaining rounds to have a chance of a fifth successive title, but he emphasised on Thursday that anything from now on was also a bonus.

"Probably we need a little bit of luck on one round to create a bigger offset, but we're going to give it all," said the Dutch driver, who won in Brazil last year from 17th on the starting grid.

"If that's going to be enough at the end of the year, I don't know.

"But there's also not much to lose. I mean, worst case, we are P3 (third) and best case, you can win a championship.

"There is an opportunity, of course, that we can win it, so we are going for it, all in," added Verstappen, winner of five of 20 races so far this season.

Norris has won six and Piastri seven. "For me there's no pressure. Even if I don't win it, I still know that I drove a really good season," said Verstappen.

"I mean, to still be talking about being in this fight, I think, is already remarkable in the first place... when you're over 100 points behind, and then still we're talking about being in this fight, I think it's very impressive." - Reuters

Pedal to the metal *Brown would rather lose title than favour one McLaren driver*

McLAREN would rather lose the world championship by a point than favour one of their drivers against Red Bull's Max Verstappen, the Formula One team's chief executive Zak Brown said yesterday.

McLaren's Lando Norris leads Australian teammate Oscar Piastri by a point in the drivers' standings with four rounds, including Sunday's Sao Paulo Grand Prix and today sprint, remaining.

The team have already won the constructors' title for the second year in a row but have not won both championships in the same year since 1998.

Verstappen, chasing his fifth title in a row, is 36 points off the pace and closing in after slashing the gap from 104 at the end of August while McLaren's pair have taken points off each other.

The Dutch driver's return to contention has reminded some of the 2007 season won by Ferrari's Kimi Raikkonen, who finished strongly and ended up beating McLaren's Lewis Hamilton and Fernando Alonso by one point.

"We're well aware of 2007," Brown told Formula One's *Beyond the Grid* podcast yesterday. "But we've got two drivers who want to win the world championship. We're playing offence; we're not playing defence.

"I'd rather go 'We did the best we can and our drivers tied on points and the other guy beat us by one' than the alternative," he added.

"Which is telling one of our drivers right now, when they're one point away from each other, 'I know you have a dream to win the world championship, but we

flipped a coin and you don't get to do it this year.' 'Forget it. That's not how we go racing.'

Norris has beaten Piastri in the last five races, a situation that has already led to online conspiracy theories about McLaren potentially favouring the Briton at the Australian's expense.

Verstappen's father Jos, himself an ex-F1 racer, stirred the pot by telling Dutch media that Piastri should stand up for himself and bang fists on the table.

The Australian, in response, told reporters at Interlagos he was quite capable of making his point and nothing needed to change.

"We're always very open with each other in terms of what we think, whether we think things have been fair, whether we think the right

decisions have been made," he said.

"I respect the team allowing us to both try and fight for the drivers' championship."

Verstappen is effectively a one-man team at Red Bull, his points making up 321 of their 20-race total of 346, and does not have to worry about Japanese teammate Yuki Tsunoda taking anything off him.

Brown said he wanted to make sure that if Verstappen were to win, it was down to him beating McLaren rather than the team beating themselves.

"In the event 2007 happens again, I'd rather have that outcome than all the other outcomes by playing favourites," he added. "We won't do it. We're racers, we're going racing." - Reuters



TOP: Lando Norris (left) and Oscar Piastri.
BOTTOM: Lewis Hamilton (left) and Fernando Alonso in 2007.
AFP/IC

Hamilton in no rush to start talks over Ferrari deal

BY PHILIP DUNCAN

LEWIS HAMILTON insists he does not need to start contract talks with Ferrari because he already has a "pretty long" deal in place.

Hamilton has failed to finish in the top three since he moved from Mercedes and is 64 points behind team-mate Charles Leclerc in the world championship.

Ferrari said they signed Hamilton on a multi-year deal when they announced his blockbuster arrival at the start of last year but did not comment on the length of his contract.

However, opening up on his future with Ferrari ahead of this weekend's Sao Paulo Grand Prix,

Hamilton, who turns 41 in January, said he was geared up to stay with them beyond the end of next season in his search for a record eighth world title.

"I have a pretty long contract," said Hamilton when asked if negotiations were under way over new deal with the *Scuderia*.

"Normally when you do a contract, it is the year before that you start to talk about it, so I am a little bit far from that point."

Hamilton arrives in Interlagos fresh off the back of his best qualifying performance for Ferrari at the previous round in Mexico City.

Hamilton started third but finished a disappointing eighth after he was handed a

controversial 10-second penalty by the stewards for running wide at turn four and being seen to gain an advantage over old nemesis Max Verstappen.

Commenting on the stewards' decision yesterday, Hamilton added: "There is not any clarity and that is part of the big issue - transparency and accountability and also that kind of secrecy as to how decisions are made.

"It is something that definitely needs to be tackled. I don't know if they (the stewards) are aware of the weight of their decisions and that they steer careers and can decide results of the championship as we have seen in the past. So something needs to be done." - The Independent

SHORTS

Fleetwood, Lowry lead in Abu Dhabi

FRIENDS Tommy Fleetwood and Shane Lowry shared the lead in the Abu Dhabi Championship after they were paired together yesterday and both shot 8-under opening rounds of 64.

The pair shared the lead with New Zealander Kazuma Kobori, South African Richard Sterne and Frenchman Adrien Saddier at the start of the last event of the DP Tour before the season-ending World Championship in Dubai.

Lowry and Fleetwood, both previous winners of the event, were drawn in a group that also included a third Ryder Cup player Rasmus Hojgaard.

"It was nice," said Lowry. "I was pretty excited when I saw the group, my pairing today, and it was nice to go out there with the boys."

Fleetwood carded eight birdies and no bogeys, while Lowry fired nine birdies and dropped a single shot.

"Something about me and Tommy," the Irishman added. "I just like playing with him, your friend, and really good player too.

"And you kind of feed off each other. It was nice."

Fleetwood agreed. "I'm so close to both the guys, Ryder Cup teammates, played with Rasmus, who I'm close with last week. It was great," the Englishman said.

"You focus on your own game," he added. "It shouldn't make that much difference but definitely when you're in a comfortable pairing or group it's nice. It's helpful."

Mclroy appreciates apology from USPGA

RORY MCILROY said PGA of America chief executive Derek Sprague sent him a personal apology for the abuse the Northern Irishman and his wife suffered during Europe's Ryder Cup victory.

Europe held off a stirring final day fightback from the United States to win 15-13 in New York in September.

Mclroy was the centre of attention for a hostile home crowd with incessant abuse with a beer even thrown at his wife Erica Mclroy, which hit her on the hat.

"I got a lovely e-mail from Derek Sprague apologising," Mclroy told the *BBC* ahead of the Abu Dhabi Championship.

"Erica worked with Derek at the PGA of America back in the day, so we know Derek and his wife pretty well.

"He couldn't have been more gracious or apologetic and he wrote us a lovely letter, which we really appreciated."

Mclroy at times hit back at the crowd but said the abuse backfired as it "galvanised" the European players to become the first side to win the Ryder Cup on foreign soil for 13 years.

"I take it as a compliment that they targeted me, but then at the same time, it was a tough week," added the world number two.

"That made us better as a team. It galvanised us and it really put our arms around each other."

Sabalenka roar past Gauff

World No. 1 fights back to reach WTA Finals last four

ARYNA SABALENKA roared back from a slow start to beat Coco Gauff 7-6(5), 6-2 and clinch a semifinal spot at the season-ending WTA Finals yesterday, sending the defending champion packing and assuring Jessica Pegula of a place in the last four.

The world No. 1, who is seeking a maiden trophy in the event since a run to the final three years ago, finished top of the Steffi Graf Group and next takes on Amanda Anisimova in a rematch of their US Open title clash.

"She always makes me work hard, always great battles against her," Sabalenka said about her showdown with Anisimova.

"I enjoy playing against her and I enjoy the fights so I'm excited to play her. I hope it's going to be a great match."

American Pegula meets the in-form Kazakh Elena Rybakina, who qualified for the semifinals as the best player from the Serena Williams Group to continue her own bid for a maiden trophy in the season finale in Saudi Arabia.

Gauff's erratic serve had been a concern after her opening defeat by Pegula, but it was the 21-year-old's aggressive return game that stood out against Sabalenka as she broke to start the match and went 4-2 up at the King Saud University Sports Arena.

Sabalenka let out a scream after she saved break points and held for 3-4 in the rematch of the French Open title clash that she lost, and the fired-up Belarusian soon broke to draw level at 5-5 with a neat forehand winner.

"I probably wouldn't put myself in that situation (again)," Sabalenka said about being 4-5 and 0-30 down.

"I was just trying to stay aggressive and trying to find my rhythm. I was working for the second set already, but magically I was able to turn things around."

"I'm super happy with the performance and super happy to get this win in straight sets."

Sabalenka showed more fight in the tiebreak to come from behind and take the first set, and there was no stopping the 27-year-old when she eased to a 4-0 lead in the second set.

Earlier, Pegula secured a breezy 6-2, 6-3 victory over the already-eliminated Jasmine Paolini and said she would work out a strategy for her next opponent despite knowing there was a slim chance of an exit if Gauff prevailed in three sets.

"We're going to be really happy with today, for the rest of the day and maybe for most of the night, and then we're going to have to switch strategies a little bit because it's a quick turnaround now," said Pegula.

"We'll be ready for the next opponent."

"Today I finally got a straight-sets win for the first time in like a few months," Pegula said.

"That always feels really good. I thought I served well, just played solid and was aggressive when I needed to be. There weren't any negative notes today." - Reuters



Belarus' Aryna Sabalenka in action during her group stage match against Coco Gauff of the US. - REUTERS/PIC

LA LIGA pacesetters Real Madrid and Barcelona will aim to bounce back from midweek Champions League setbacks as they return to La Liga action this weekend, looking to rebuild confidence ahead of a two-week international break.

Leaders Real, who have 30 points after 11 matches, hold a five-point lead over second-placed Barcelona.

However, inconsistency against stronger opponents has led to criticism of manager Xabi Alonso's rotation policy, and the team will look to steady the ship when they visit local rivals Rayo Vallecano at the Estadio de Vallecas tomorrow (11.15pm Malaysian time).

Real suffered a humbling 1-0 defeat at Liverpool on Wednesday, with Belgium goalkeeper Thibaut Courtois delivering a stellar performance to prevent a heavier loss.

Despite his heroics, the defeat highlighted concerns about Real's ability to compete at the highest level in Europe. The result dampened the optimism generated by their hard-fought 2-1 El Clasico victory over visiting Barca two weeks ago.

Alonso, who took over from Carlo Ancelotti in May, has guided Real to 18 wins in 21 matches across

Real, Barca seek La Liga solace

all competitions.

However, defeats by Paris St Germain, Atletico Madrid, and Liverpool, coupled with tactical decisions such as the sparing use of high-profile signings Trent Alexander-Arnold and Endrick, have led to questions over

Alonso's approach.

"It was a very demanding, high-paced match and we lacked a bit more threat to cause damage in the final third," Alonso said after the loss to Liverpool following Alexis Mac Allister's header just past the

hour mark following a freekick.

"Thibaut held firm but that goal gave them the advantage and then we struggled a bit. There's nothing to reproach the team for. It's still November. (On Tuesday) there were things that were working and others that needed improvement."

Barcelona's own defensive frailties were again exposed as they were held to a dramatic 3-3 draw at Club Brugge in the Champions League on Thursday as they travel to 12th-placed Celta Vigo on Monday (4am).

"We have to analyse everything, talk to the players and try to do better," said coach Hansi Flick after the draw in Belgium. "But we want to play with our own ideas. A 3-3 isn't the best result for us, we need to talk about this, but the positive thing is that we managed to reply after they took the lead three times." - Reuters



Real's Kylian Mbappe reacts against Liverpool. - REUTERS/PIC

Napoli's top spot under threat as chasing pack close in

CHAMPIONS Napoli top Serie A but in a close battle at the summit anything less than a win at Bologna this weekend could see them slip as low as fourth with a chasing trio ready to pounce.

Napoli were held to a 0-0 draw by Como last weekend, while Inter Milan and AC Milan joined Roma on 21 points, one point behind Antonio Conte's side who face in-form Bologna on Sunday (10pm).

Bologna began slowly, with two defeats in their opening three games, but a seven-match unbeaten league run has propelled Vincenzo Italiano's team to fifth place, four points off Napoli.

Napoli recently lost midfielder Kevin De Bruyne to a thigh injury, and they sorely missed

the Belgian's creative spark in their last two games, with Tuesday's Champions League meeting against Eintracht Frankfurt ending in another 0-0 draw at home.

Conte was also without Leonardo Spinazzola and Billy Gilmour for the Frankfurt game after both went off injured against Como, and the manager continues to struggle with combining domestic and European competition, a problem Napoli did not have last season.

"We all have to understand that it is more difficult for the players, for the therapists, for the doctors, for me to prepare matches every three days," Conte told Sky Sports after the Frankfurt draw.

"It's more difficult because of injuries, there

are all these problems that I think we are dealing with in the best possible way."

Napoli beat Inter 3-1 less than two weeks ago, but Cristian Chivu's side rebounded with two wins to pull themselves right back into the title race and on Monday (3.45am) host Lazio, who, like Bologna, have recovered from a rocky start.

Lazio lost three of their opening four games but are unbeaten in six and have not conceded a goal in their last four matches.

Inter go into the Lazio game on the back of another Champions League victory in midweek and, while they struggled before overcoming Kairat Almaty 2-1, Chivu has helped them win their opening four games in the competition for the first time. - Reuters

Leipzig stay in Bayern's slipstream

OVERSHADOWED by Bayern Munich's explosive start to the season, RB Leipzig are quietly putting together an impressive opening to their Bundesliga campaign.

Leipzig travel to Hoffenheim today (10.30pm) in second spot, five behind league leaders Bayern.

Thumped 6-0 by Bayern in the season opener in Munich, Leipzig have since claimed 22 of a possible 24 points.

Without European football this season, Leipzig have had the time to bed in their new recruits.

Having lost big names like Xavi Simons, Benjamin Sesko and Lois Openda in the summer, the Red Bull-owned club brought in more than a dozen young talents.

Coach Ole Werner was brought in from Werder Bremen in the summer, after Red Bull football boss Jurgen Klopp dramatically sacked former manager and friend Marco Rose.

"The short duration it took for the team to come together as a team on the pitch is a bit surprising," RB Leipzig CEO Johann Plenge told reporters yesterday.

"I think it's remarkable how the team managed this loss on the first matchday," Plenge said.

"It helped them get closer together in the locker room."

"By winning more and more, the team has become more confident."

"The coach is already quite confident. And I think it's becoming a well-oiled machine."

The standout new arrival is 18-year-old Yan Diomande. Signed for €20 million (RM96.35 million) after just six months at Leganes, the Ivorian has contributed two goals and three assists in his past two matches.

"We already knew that he was a top talent and that he had a strong mindset," Plenge said.

"(But) we were surprised that it only took a couple of matchdays to bring this immediately onto the pitch."

Plenge said Diomande would become "one of the faces of our club in the upcoming seasons." - AFP



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Villa edge Maccabi Tel Aviv in fraught Europa League match

ASTON VILLA beat Maccabi Tel Aviv 2-0 in the Europa League yesterday in a match dominated by tight security measures in Birmingham with travelling fans barred over safety concerns.

Some 700 police were positioned around the stadium as pro-Palestinian and pro-Israel protesters held separate demonstrations outside Villa Park in the run-up to kickoff.

The protests passed largely peacefully, with police saying they made six arrests for offences ranging from racial aggravation to failing to comply with a dispersal order.

Villa announced last month that no Maccabi fans would be allowed at the match following a police risk assessment.

The decision sparked criticism, including from British Prime Minister Keir Starmer who set about trying to reverse the move, but the Israeli club later announced it would decline tickets for its fans anyway, citing safety concerns.

On Thursday, some 200 pro-Palestinian demonstrators gathered at one side of the stadium, chanting "Free Palestine" and displaying banners calling for a boycott of Israel and its exclusion from international football.

A few dozen pro-Israel protesters stood at the other side waving Israeli flags and holding posters that read "Keep anti-Semitism out of football".

One Villa supporter, Adam Selway, said while he was not making any political statement, he felt sympathy with fans unable to attend and simply wanted to watch a football match.

"It's not about politics, it's about football," he said. "It's not the Villa fans that don't want anyone here - the Villa fans want the away fans here."

On the pitch, Villa took the lead one minute into first-half added time through Ian Maatsen.

Donyell Malen doubled the lead shortly before the hour as Unai Emery's side moved to nine points after four matches.

"(It was a) good evening," Villa manager Emery told *TNT Sports*.

"Focus and respecting the competition and the teams. We were playing solidly and playing seriously."

Elsewhere, Roma won 2-0 at Rangers thanks to first-half strikes by Matias Soule and Lorenzo Pellegrini.

The result moved Gian Piero Gasperini's side up to 18th, while troubled Rangers lounge at the foot of the standings.



Aston Villa's Ian Maatsen (right) scores his team's first goal in yesterday's Europa League match against Maccabi Tel Aviv at Villa Park. - REUTERS/SPIC

In a bad night for Glasgow clubs, Scottish champions Celtic went down 3-1 at Midtjylland.

With four wins in as many outings, the Danes top the league phase standings with a perfect 12 points.

Sean Dyche's second European match in charge at Nottingham Forest finished in a goalless stalemate at Austria's Sturm Graz, with Morgan Gibbs-White missing a 35th-minute

spot-kick for the visitors.

The Premier League club sit one point above the elimination places.

Former Manchester United winger Antony netted his 15th goal for Real Betis since joining on loan in January, before making his move permanent in the summer, as the Andalusians beat Lyon 2-0.

Two other French Ligue 1 clubs Nice and Lille lost as well. Nice went down 3-

1 at home to second-placed German team Freiburg. Bruno Genesio's Lille fell 1-0 at Red Star Belgrade.

Celta Vigo won 3-0 away to Dinamo Zagreb, while Porto drew 1-1 at 10-man Utrecht of the Netherlands.

Belgium's Genk edged a seven-goal thriller at Braga 4-3 and two late strikes by Bilal El Khannouss and Deniz Undav handed Stuttgart a 2-0 victory over Feyenoord. - AFP

Palace see off AZ Alkmaar

CRYSTAL PALACE returned to winning ways in the Conference League yesterday with a 3-1 win in London over AZ Alkmaar.

Following a shock defeat at Selhurst Park last time out against AEK Larnaca of Cyprus, Palace earned their first-ever home win in the main stage of a European competition by beating AZ.

A Maxence Lacroix (*pic*) goal followed up by an Ismaila Sarr brace secured that win for Oliver Glasner's Eagles as they moved to six points after three league phase outings.

"We are really happy. The game we lost here was sad for us but we said before we want to give the win to the fans. Everyone deserves it," Lacroix told *TNT Sports*.

France international Jean-Philippe Mateta missed a 17th-minute penalty for Palace as it looked as if their home hoodoo in Europe might continue.

However, they soon went ahead on 22 minutes as defender Lacroix fired home a sharp finish from a knockdown, before Senegalese forward Sarr prodded home from close range on

the stroke of half-time.

A deflected Sven Mijns strike in the 54th minute gave the visitors hope but Sarr then wrapped up the victory three minutes later with a neat one-on-one finish.

Mainz came from behind to win 2-1 at home to Fiorentina thanks to a 95th-minute goal by Lee Jae-sung.

The two-time Conference League runners-up took the lead inside 20 minutes courtesy of Simon Sohm, before Mainz hit back through Benedict Hollerbach.

As the match seemed to be set for a stalemate, Lee glanced home to grab a third win in three league phase outings for the Germans.

Mainz are joined by two other teams, Turkey's Samsunspor and Slovenians Celje, in



still holding an unblemished record in the tournament this campaign.

The Turkish Super Lig outfit beat Hamrun Spartans of Malta 3-0, while Celje scored two goals in five second half minutes to defeat Legia Warsaw 2-1.

Aberdeen played out a goalless draw with AEK Larnaca and Shakhtar Donetsk beat Iceland's Breidablik 2-0 in the Polish city of Krakow.

Dynamo Kyiv had six different goalscorers as they thumped Bosnians Zrinjski 6-0 in Lublin, Poland.

Spain's Rayo Vallecano edged Lech Poznan 3-2 at home, while Ligue 1 club Strasbourg moved to seven points with a 2-1 victory in Sweden against Hacken. - AFP

Amorim urges Devils to 'focus on future'

RUBEN AMORIM has told Manchester United to "focus on the future" following former Old Trafford star Cristiano Ronaldo's withering assessment of his old club.

United are looking to rebuild following a woeful 2024/25 season, which saw them finish a lowly 15th in the Premier League and lose in the Europa League final to Tottenham Hotspur.

Ronaldo insisted this week United manager Amorim cannot do "miracles" at a club that is "not on a good path", saying "they need to change and it's not only about the coach and players".

But when Ronaldo's comments were put to his former Portugal teammate ahead of today's (8.30pm) trip to Spurs, the United boss

said: "Of course he knows and he has a huge impact in everything he said."

"What we need to focus (on) is the future. We know that we as a club made a lot of mistakes in the past, but we are trying to change that."

"So, let's not focus on what happened. Let's focus on what we are doing now, and we are doing that."

Amorim said the changes being put in place were having positive results.

"We are changing a lot of things in the structure, the way we do things, the way we want the players to behave," said the 40-year-old coach.

"We are doing that and we are improving, so let's focus on the way we are doing things."

We are improving, let's continue and forget a little bit the past."

United have lost their last four games against Spurs.

However, they head into today's match unbeaten in their last four Premier League matches, a sequence that includes a 2-1 win over champions and arch-rivals Liverpool.

Amorim, asked how United had changed since being beaten by Spurs in the Europa League final in May, replied: "First of all, the characteristics of the players."

"So, we are a better team, we play better, we understand the game better. I think we are more confident ... I expect a different game, that we can play better, but also to have a little bit luck to help us to win the game." - AFP

Howe keen to break new ground with Magpies

BY DAMIAN SPELLMAN

EDDIE HOWE is determined to make history by leading Newcastle into the Champions League knockout stage for the first time.

The Magpies, who sit sixth in the table at the halfway point, have given themselves a solid platform to progress by taking nine points from the first 12 on offer.

Sir Bobby Robson side made it out of the initial group in the 2002-03 campaign, but in those days, that secured entry only to a second group phase and they are yet to make the sudden death fixtures, something head coach Howe is desperate to remedy at the fourth attempt.

He said: "Yes, it's a big prize for us and our eyes are very much on it, and I want the players to be feeling the same."

"We said at the start of the Champions League campaign that we didn't want to have that feeling that we were just pleased to be in the competition."

"It's serious. We want to progress. We've put ourselves in a stronger position now to do that after the first defeat, but there are still many challenges ahead."

Those challenges only increase in difficulty after Thursday's 2-0 home win over Athletic Bilbao, Newcastle's third on the trot without conceding, the perfect response to their opening home defeat by Barcelona.

The programme always looked front-loaded for the Magpies with three of their first four games at St. James' Park, and they now head for Marseille later this month and Bayer Leverkusen in December before PSV Eindhoven arrive on Tyneside ahead of a trip to reigning champions Paris St Germain in January.

Howe said: "When you look at the fixtures we were always aware these home games were really important which put an added pressure on us."

"Of course we've had our troubles in the Premier League away from home, but we'll look forward to these games. They're an amazing thing."

"Marseille will be a great experience for everybody, a tough ground to go to, we're looking forward to that."

"It's certainly better to go there with nine points behind us." - The Independent

RESULTS

EUROPA LEAGUE: Basel 3 (Shaqiri 19-pen, 73, Salah 88) FCSB 1 (Olaru 57), Dinamo Zagreb 0 Celta Vigo 3 (Duran 4, 44, Dominguez 28-og), Malmö 0 Panathinaikos 1 (Duricic 85), Midtjylland 3 (Erlic 33, Gogorza 35, Franculino 41) Celtic 1 (Hatate 81-pen), Nice 1 (Kevin Carlos 25) Freiburg 3 (Manzambi 29, Grifo 39-pen, Scherhant 42), Red Bull Salzburg 2 (Vertessen 59, Terzic 80) Go Ahead Eagles 0, Red Star Belgrade 1 (Arnautovic 85-pen) Lille 0, Sturm Graz 0 Nottingham Forest 0, Utrecht 1 (Rodriguez 48) Porto 1 (Sainz 66), Aston Villa 2 (Maatsen 45+1, Malen 59-pen) Maccabi Tel Aviv 0, Bologna 0 Brann 0, Ferencvaros 3 (Kanichowski 31, Cadu 53, Joseph 87) Ludogorets 1 (Son 78), PAOK 4 (Bianco 54, Giakoumakis 67, Konstantelis 72, Baba 75) Young Boys 0, Rangers 0 Roma 2 (Soule 13, Pellegrini 36), Real Betis 2 (Ezzalzouli 29, Antony 35) Lyon 0, Braga 3 (Zalazar 30, 71, Navarro 86) Genk 4 (Heymans 45+2, Sor 48, Oh Hyeon-Gyu 59, Medina 72), Stuttgart 2 (El Khouanous 84, Undav 90+1) Feyenoord 0, Viktoria Plzen 0 Fenerbahce 0.

CONFERENCE LEAGUE: AEK Athens 1 (Jovic 90-pen) Shamrock Rovers 1 (Burke 21-pen), AEK Larnaca 0 Aberdeen 0, Celje 2 (Iosifov 72, Karnicnik 77) Legia Warsaw 1 (Urbanski 17), KuPS 3 (Antwi 41, Parzyszek 48, Oksanen 81) Slovan Bratislava 1 (Marcelli 3), Mainz 2 (Hollerbach 68, Lee Jae-Sung 90+5) Fiorentina 1 (Sohm 16), Noah 1 (Mula-husejinovic 21) Sigma Olomouc 2 (Slavicek 10, Sylla 24), Samsunspor 3 (Holse 18, Kilinc 58, Mouandil-madji 77) Hamrun Spartans 0, Shakhtar Donetsk 2 (Bondarenko 28, Elias 65) Breidablik 0, Sparta Prague 0 Rakow Czestochowa 0, Crystal Palace 3 (Lacroix 22, Sarr 45+4, 57) AZ Alkmaar 1 (Mijnans 54), Dynamo Kyiv 6 (Popov 21, Guerrero 56, Kabaiev 59, Buialsykyi 67, Yarmolenko 78, Blanuta 83) Zrinjski 0, Hacken 1 (Dembe 61) Strasbourg 2 (Enciso 21, Godo 60), Lausanne 1 (Bair 40) Omonia Nicosia 1 (Neophytou 34), Lincoln Red Imps 1 (Gomez 83) Rijeka 1 (Fruk 41), Rapid Vienna 0 Craiova 1 (Romanchuk 37), Rayo Vallecano 3 (Palazon 58, De Frutos 83, Alvaro Garcia 90+4) Lech Poznan 2 (Palma 11, Kozubal 39), Shelbourne 0 Drita 1 (Ajzeraj 57), Shkendija 1 (Latifi 49) Jagielonia 1 (Lozano 90+10).

Aaron keen on scratch pair for SEA Games

NATIONAL men's doubles shuttler Aaron Chia is open to partnering with any player at the 2025 SEA Games in Thailand next month as he believes fielding scratch pairs could be the key to victory.

He said the idea was a realistic approach, given that Malaysia would be fielding their strongest squad for the biennial event.

"Yes, I think Malaysia have a better chance this time. However, we've also discussed with the coach the possibility of trying a scratch pair, as the SEA Games do not involve world ranking points.

"I think scratch pair combinations can work for both the individual and team events," he told reporters after a training session at the Academy Badminton Malaysia (ABM) in Bukit Kiara, Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

The Paris Olympics bronze medallist will be joined by his regular partner Soh Wooi Yik for the Games, scheduled from Dec 9 to 20, but the final decision on pairings rests with the coach.

Aaron said the strategy of using scratch pairs could surprise opponents and also serve as preparation for next year's Thomas Cup.

"I think scratch pairs could give us the edge. You can see how good Fajar (Alfian) and (Muhammad Shohibul) Fikri (of Indonesia) have been as a scratch pair. Maybe we can also pull off a similar surprise," he said.

Malaysia last won a badminton gold medal at the 2021 SEA Games in Vietnam through mixed doubles pair Chen Tang Jie and Peck Yen Wei. At the last edition in Cambodia, Malaysian players won only two silver and four bronze medals. — Bernama

Promising start

Two silvers, one bronze for M'sia in Asian Petanque Championships

THE NATIONAL petanque squad got their campaign in the 6th Asian Petanque Championships off to a promising start by clinching two silvers and one bronze at the conclusion of the precision shooting events at the Arena Petanque Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Nur Iman Aina Ahmad Sabti and Muhd Harith Muhaimin Hafaizul delivered silver medals in the women's and junior categories, while veteran Muhd Nuzul Azwan Ahmad Temizi added a bronze in the men's division.

In the women's category, Nur Iman defeated Vietnam's Thach Thi Anh Lan 30-18 in the semifinals before going down 27-22 to Indonesia's Anni Saputri in the final.

It was an emotional moment for Nur Iman, competing in the shooting discipline for the first time after years of excelling in triples.

"This was my first time qualifying for a shooting event final, so it was quite challenging holding back the tears," she said

in a statement yesterday.

"My opponent was very strong and she even beat the Thai player (world champion) earlier, but I gave everything I could.

"I've only competed in triples before, so being trusted to take part in precision shooting was a big responsibility. I didn't expect to reach the final.

"This silver means a lot to me, and with the SEA Games looming, I'll definitely fight harder for gold there (2025 SEA Games in Thailand from Dec 9-20)."

In the junior category, 15-year-old Muhd Harith, a student of SMK Muadzam Shah, Pahang, edged Japan's Koiwa Toshihiro 20-16 in the semifinals before narrowly losing 29-26 to Cambodia's Nun Ravin in the final.

"My form today dropped a bit compared to yesterday. But I really wanted that gold medal and gave it my best shot," he said.

"Still, this is my best result so far on the international stage, and it gives me great

motivation to go even further."

In the men's category, Nuzul Azwan, 37, produced a determined performance before bowing out 27-19 to Taiwan's Wu Kun-yu, who later fell 44-30 to Thailand's Khamdee Ratchata in the final.

A top-eight finisher at last year's World Championships in Dijon, France, Nuzul Azwan said the semifinals served as a valuable tune-up ahead of his eighth SEA Games appearance next month.

"From training earlier, I felt my focus slipping, and it carried into the match. Technically, everything's fine, but mentally I need to be stronger in crucial moments," he said.

The four-day championships, which began on Thursday, feature 141 participants from 15 countries as they compete in two events – precision shooting and triples – across men's, women's and junior categories. — Bernama



Red Giants blow two-goal lead and hopes of ACL2 progress

Selangor's Chrigror Moraes (left) in action against Persib Bandung defenders. — BERNAMAPIC

SELANGOR FC'S hopes of going further in the Asian Football Conference (AFC) Champions League Two (ACL2) were dashed when they went down 3-2 to Indonesia's Persib Bandung in a Group B match at the Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) Stadium on Thursday night.

Their fourth straight defeat has left the Red Giants at the bottom of the four-team standings with no points to show for.

Persib lead the group with 10 points, followed by Bangkok

United (9pts) and Singapore's Lion City Sailors (4).

Selangor began the match in style when they opened the scoring in the third minute through Chrigror Moraes, who finished off a cross from Alvin Fortes.

The Red Giants extended their lead in the 17th minute through an own goal by Patricio Matricardi.

Persib, coached by Bojan Hodak, then struck three times after the break, with Andrew Jung

benefiting from a goalmouth melee to pull a goal back in the 49th minute.

Persib then unexpectedly levelled the score at 2-2 through an Adam Alis Setyano goal in the 81st minute, and just when it looked like the game was heading for a draw, a mistake by Selangor goalkeeper Sikh Izhan Nazrel allowed Adam Alis to pounce and slot home the winner in injury time.

The match was marred by crowd trouble in the visiting

supporters' area which spilled over onto the field area as soon as the match ended.

"AFC takes match security seriously but we are waiting for a full report first to find out what happened," Secretary General Datuk Seri Windsor Paul John said yesterday.

"After receiving the full report, it will be forwarded to the AFC Disciplinary Committee," he said.

Selangor still have two more group matches to go – against Bangkok United and Lion City.

SHORTS

Davies back in the fray

JOHOR Darul Ta'zim (JDT) right-back Matthew Davies has been recalled to join the national team centralised training camp in preparation for their Group F match against Nepal in the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Asian Cup Qualifiers on Nov 18.

Davies was dropped from the previous two outings – both against Laos (winning 3-0 away on Oct 9 and 5-1 at home on Oct 14) – due to injury.

The Football Association of Malaysia (FAM) said that Harimau Malaya coach Peter Cklamovski has also called up Kuala Lumpur City midfielders Ryan Lambert and Aliff Izzwan Yuslan, as well as Terengganu centreback Muhammad Ubaidullah Shamsul Fazili, who plays for the national U-23 side.

"Cklamovski has retained 24 players from

the squad that defeated Laos away and at home," said FAM in a statement today.

The 27-man Harimau Malaya squad will undergo centralised training from Nov 10-17 in preparation for the Nov 18 game against Nepal at the National Stadium in Bukit Jalil here.

M'sia offered Petanque WC hosting right

MALAYSIA is set for a historic milestone after being offered the hosting rights for 2026 Petanque World Championships next year.

The development was revealed by Malaysian Boules Sports Federation (MBSF) acting president Cheah Ban Cheng, who said Malaysia had been offered the opportunity to stage the 2026 edition, tentatively scheduled for end-September, with a decision to be finalised after consultation with the Youth and Sports Ministry (KBS).

"It's an incredible honour as Malaysia has never hosted a World Championship before.

"The World Championships bring together the best teams from five continents, based on world rankings from the previous edition. For Asia, only six countries qualify, so it's truly the sport's elite level," he said in a statement.

He added that Malaysia's readiness is supported by world-class facilities such as the Arena Petanque Kuala Lumpur, developed with the support from Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

"We already have the infrastructure and are ready anytime. Having such a facility right in the heart of the capital city is something few countries can boast," he said.

Cheah also noted that the proposed hosting would align perfectly with Visit Malaysia Year 2026, and that MBSF plans to engage both the Youth and Sports Ministry and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture for support.



Battle royale

Man City, Liverpool clash to keep Arsenal within reach



Erling Haaland

Pep Guardiola

Arne Slot

Mohamed Salah

CLASHES between Manchester City and Liverpool have often been regarded as key battles in Premier League title races in recent seasons but Monday's (12.30am Malaysian time) encounter may merely point to which of the two clubs is best equipped to try to chase Arsenal.

By the time the game kicks off at the Etihad Stadium, Arsenal, who visit surprise package Sunderland on Sunday (1.30am), could be 10 points clear of champions Liverpool and nine ahead of Pep Guardiola's City.

That likely scenario would increase the pressure on City and Liverpool, who head into the last round of fixtures before another international stoppage second and third respectively.

While it is still early in the season, a beefed-up Arsenal squad looks well-equipped to protect top spot, having conceded only three goals in 10 League games and none in the last four.

City manager Guardiola and his Liverpool counterpart Arne Slot will be only too aware of the relentless efficiency Arsenal have displayed so far this season and will know that defeat on Monday would leave them with a mountain to climb.

At least there are signs that both clubs are finding form. City have lost only once in their last 13 games in all competitions and on Wednesday pummelled Borussia Dortmund 4-1 in the Champions League with Erling Haaland scoring his 18th club goal this season and a rejuvenated Phil Foden bagging a brace.

Liverpool have also emerged from a run of six

defeats in seven matches in all competitions to beat Aston Villa and Real Madrid in their last two games.

City lost home and away to Liverpool last season as they were dethroned as champions and Guardiola admitted he was surprised at their stumbles this season.

"Of course, but sometimes it's about momentum," Guardiola stated. "All the clubs are there except Arsenal who are more consistent than anyone."

"But the season is long so we try to be there and see what happens. To be honest I'm so excited and happy to prepare for the match. I'm desperate to play against Liverpool."

Arsenal will be wary of a Sunderland side who have taken to life back in the Premier League like ducks to water.

Although Regis Le Bris's side have enjoyed a favourable fixture list, few would ever have imagined they would be fourth in the table with 18 points after 10 games.

No promoted team has had more points after 10 Premier League games since Hull City managed 20 from 10 games in 2008, although that should be a cautionary tale for Sunderland as Hull subsequently collapsed and were almost relegated.

The Black Cats will look to captain Granit Khaka to finally breach Arsenal's rock-solid defence.

Khaka has been a revelation since joining Sunderland from Bayer Leverkusen and was described by ex-Liverpool defender and Sky

Sports pundit Jamie Carragher as the "signing of the season".

The Switzerland midfielder scored his first goal for Sunderland against Everton on Monday and also has three assists.

Khaka, 33, said he was looking forward to facing a club where he spent "seven amazing years". "We know the quality that Arsenal has," he told *Sky Sports*. "It will be an emotional game for myself."

Arsenal will hope he does not enjoy the match too much.

The Gunners are likely to be without Viktor Gyokeres for the trip to the north east after he suffered a hamstring injury against Burnley last weekend while skipper Martin Odegaard is still not ready to return from injury.

The weekend's Premier League action begins in north London today (8.30pm) where sixth-placed Tottenham Hotspur welcome eighth-placed Manchester United, with the hosts seeking to bounce back from a home defeat by Chelsea last weekend.

United will have no need for motivation, having lost all four games they played against Tottenham last season, most notably the Europa League final in Bilbao.

"We are in a better moment but we still have a lot to do to consistently win games in a row," United boss Ruben Amorim said.

Chelsea host bottom club Wolverhampton Wanderers tomorrow (4am) while fifth-placed Bournemouth travel to Aston Villa (10pm), who despite being 11th are only four points behind



FIXTURES ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

All matches at 10pm
Malaysian time unless stated

TODAY

Tottenham vs Man Utd (8.30pm)

Everton vs Fulham (11pm)

West Ham vs Burnley (11pm)

TOMORROW

Sunderland vs Arsenal (1.30am)

Chelsea vs Wolves (4am)

Aston Villa vs Bournemouth

Brentford vs Newcastle

Crystal Palace vs Brighton

Nottingham Forest vs Leeds

MONDAY (12.30am)

Man City vs Liverpool

second-placed Manchester City.

Brentford welcome Newcastle United tomorrow when Nottingham Forest will seek their first Premier League win under new manager Sean Dyche as they host Leeds United. - Reuters/AFP