

Pipe replacement works in Seri Kembangan close to completion

By MEGAT SYAHAR



(From left) Tey, Wong and Hong speaking during a press conference at Jalan BS 7/1 on the pipe replacement works in Seri Kembangan.

PIPE replacement works involving five roads near Taman Serdang Utama in Seri Kembangan, Selangor, have been completed.



Sukarelawan dan anggota daripada pelbagai agensi digerakkan dalam operasi mega pembersihan di kawasan terjejas akibat insiden kebakaran saluran gas di Putra Heights dan Kampung Kusla Sungai Baru pada 12 April 2025. Foto MOHD KHAIRUL HELMY MOHD DIN/MEDIA SELANGOR



Sukarelawan membersihkan kawasan sekitar Putra Harmoni di Putra Heights, Subang Jaya pada 13 April 2025. Foto AHMAD ZAKKI JILAN/MEDIA SELANGOR

Bagi insiden letupan gas di Putra Heights pula, KDEBWM membuat pembersihan luaran tiga hari selepas insiden berlaku seperti memotong pokok tumbang dan mengumpulkan sisa runtuh.

"Kita juga masih menempatkan tong RoRo di kawasan terjejas agar penduduk boleh membuang barang-barang yang rosak atau tidak digunakan," katanya.

Tingkatkan aset, tambah kecekapan

Berikutan cabaran besar yang dihadapi, KDEBWM kini dalam proses menambah aset operasi bagi meningkatkan kecekapan dan keberkesanan pengurusan bencana.

Ini termasuk pembelian jentera pengaut untuk memudahkan kerja pengangkutan sampah berskala besar, serta tong RoRo baharu berkapasiti 18 tan – lebih besar berbanding saiz sedia ada iaitu 7.5 tan.



Pengarah Urusan KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM) Dato' Ramli Mohd Tahir memantau kerja penyedutan dalam longkang ketika program gotong-royong pascabanjir di Taman Sri Muda, Shah Alam pada 6 Februari 2022. Foto REMY ARIFIN/ SELANGORKINI

"Tong bersaiz kecil boleh masuk ke lorong sempit, manakala yang besar memudahkan pemindahan sisa," jelas Ramli.

Selain itu, pihaknya juga mempertimbang untuk memperoleh peralatan khusus seperti penyembur air bertekanan tinggi dan pembersih takungan air bagi menambah baik tahap kebersihan pascainsiden.

Bersemangat laksana amanah

Semangat kerja pasukan diuji tatkala berdepan cabaran luar biasa. Justeru, Ramli sentiasa mengingatkan kakitangannya untuk memegang amanah dan menjalankan tugas dengan tanggungjawab.

"Sudah pasti penat itu dirasai, tetapi saya sentiasa ingatkan dan terapkan semangat positif supaya masyarakat kekal percaya dengan perkhidmatan diberikan," katanya.

Kisah KDEBWM menjadi peringatan bahawa tanggungjawab pascabencana bukan sekadar pada usaha menyelamatkan, tetapi juga memastikan persekitaran kembali selamat untuk didiami semula.

Sebagai pemain penting dalam landskap pengurusan sisa di negeri ini, KDEBWM membuktikan keberanian dan kesungguhan di belakang tabir juga penting demi kesejahteraan rakyat secara menyeluruh.

BERITA UTAMA RENCANA WAWANCARA

KDEBWM bersihkan 'luka' bencana, siap siaga depanti situasi luar jangka

by Siti Rohaizah Zainal | June 15, 2025 | 8:00 am

SHAH ALAM, 15 JUN: Dalam tempoh tiga tahun, Selangor berdepan dua insiden besar yang meninggalkan kesan mendalam kepada rakyat – bah besar pada 2021 dan letupan paip gas di Putra Heights, April lalu.

Kedua-dua kejadian itu bukan hanya menyebabkan kerosakan harta benda termasuk rumah dan kenderaan, malah mengakibatkan kerugian mencecah puluhan ribu ringgit buat sebahagian penduduk terlibat.

Musibah yang melanda memberi kesan kepada emosi mangsa. Selain menyediakan sokongan moral dan bantuan kewangan, usaha baik pulih dan pembersihan skala besar menjadi tumpuan negeri.

Demi memastikan persekitaran kembali bersih dan selamat, KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM) – agensi pengurusan sisa pepejal di Selangor hampir sedekad lalu, memikul tanggungjawab berat.

Bukan hanya perlu menjalankan tugas hakiki di seluruh negeri, tetapi KDEBWM diberi peranan sebagai petugas barisan hadapan untuk menguruskan situasi genting dan di luar jangka.



Pengarah Urusan KDEB Waste Management (KDEBWM) Dato' Ramli Tahir bercakap kepada media ketika wawancara Media Selangor di pejabat KDEBWM, Shah Alam pada 22 Mei 2025. Foto HAFIZ OTHMAN/MEDIA SELANGOR

Pikul tanggungjawab berat

Mengakui insiden tersebut mencabar, Pengarah Urusannya Dato' Ramli Tahir turut menganggap ia sebagai titik tolak buat pasukannya meningkatkan kesiapsiagaan berdepan bencana bila-bila masa.

"Apabila operasi menyelamatkan selesai, di sini bermulanya peranan KDEBWM dalam aspek pembersihan. Bagi KDEBWM, antara paling mencabar ialah insiden banjir kerana banyak lokaliti terkesan.

"Kami perlu menyusun gerak kerja sebaiknya dengan mempertimbang banyak perkara termasuk kutipan sisa banjir selain sampah harian yang perlu diteruskan," katanya kepada Media Selangor.

Menurutnya, lebih 600 lori Roll-On Roll-Off (RoRo) digerakkan ke lokasi terjejas bagi mengangkut timbunan sampah dan sisa bah mengikut tempoh ditetapkan Kerajaan Negeri.

Malah, operasi harian seperti kutipan sampah domestik di kawasan perumahan tetap diteruskan meskipun lebih 50 lori RoRo mereka turut terjejas akibat banjir ketika itu.

Pipe replacement works in Seri Kembangan close to completion ✓

STAR POST
16/6

By MEGAT SYAHAR
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PIPE replacement works involving five roads near Taman Serdang Utama in Seri Kembangan, Selangor, have been completed.

Seri Kembangan assemblyman Wong Siew Ki said contractors had also resurfaced the affected roads.

"The pipe replacement works covered Jalan BS 7/1, Jalan SK 1/1, Jalan SK 13/2, Jalan 14/2 and Jalan 14/2A.

"About 1km of piping was replaced in total," she said during a press conference at Jalan BS 7/1.

Subang Jaya City Council (MBSJ) Zone 22 councillor Tey Boon Kiat added that the project was necessary to avoid future

water supply disruptions.

"If the replacement work is not done, the old pipes may burst and cause interruptions to Selangor's water supply.

"This is part of the state government's ongoing efforts to prevent such issues," he said.

Meanwhile, pipe replacement works are ongoing at Jalan BS 5/3.

"The pipes have been changed

and water pressure testing is ongoing.

"If there are no issues, resurfacing works will follow and the project will be completed by next month," said Tey.

Wong added that mitigation efforts were also underway to address flooding in the area.

"Drainage and Irrigation Department held a site visit with contractors interested in bidding

for the Sungai Kuyoh upgrading project, which is estimated to be worth RM200,000.

"The project aims to address flooding and river overflow here, particularly in Taman Sri Serdang," she said.

Wong said the authorities were working to resolve these issues and to increase the river's water capacity to better manage future rainfall.

THE STAR

16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:.....

MPAJ working to license, regulate riverside businesses

NONE of the 70 businesses currently operating in Kampung Kemensah, Hulu Kelang, Selangor are licensed, because of zoning restrictions and land status issues, according to Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ).

Despite this, MPAJ said it had long-term plans to regulate and license these businesses through a formal whitelisting programme aimed at introducing a proper regulatory framework.

MPAJ deputy president Hasrolnizam Shaari said the initiative intended to bring recreational, tourism and commercial activities in the area under official oversight.

A census conducted in October last year by MPAJ's Licensing and Entrepreneur Development Department identified 14 types of business operations along Sungai Kemensah, including all-terrain vehicle (ATV) services, chalets, restaurants, farms and retail shops.

"None of the 70 businesses have valid licences from MPAJ."

"Licensing is difficult because of issues involving land status and zoning restrictions, as the area is primarily designated for agricultural and residential use," he said in an interview with *StarMetro*.

Even so, he said MPAJ was taking a "way forward" approach, acknowledging the area's strong potential for recreational and eco-tourism activities.

In January, a proposal was submitted to Selangor Economic Action Council (MITES) seeking approval for the issuance of conditional temporary business licences and business legalisation guidelines.



Hasrolnizam says licensing is difficult because of land status issues and zoning restrictions.

The state government approved the proposal in principle and MPAJ is now drafting the operational framework.

MPAJ is also currently conducting detailed fieldwork to map the locations, sizes and land ownership status of all the businesses.

Many are located on land not zoned for commercial use, further complicating the licensing process.

Hasrolnizam noted that coordination was ongoing with various agencies, including the Forestry Department, Selangor Town and Country Planning Department, Drainage and Irrigation Department, Selangor Water Management Authority (LUAS) and Gombak Land Office.

He stressed that the key concern was ensuring that business operations do not negatively impact the environment, particularly the river ecosystem.

"This includes proper management of wastewater, rubbish disposal and ensuring the safety of visitors.



Roadside shops selling various items are among the business types targeted under the whitelisting programme. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

"The guidelines currently being drafted will stipulate these requirements and businesses will be required to comply in order to be licensed."

"We expect to complete the next phase of field assessments and begin engaging with operators by July or August," he said, adding that the target was to issue conditional licences before 2026.

Operators will be required to adhere to strict conditions, including proper sewerage systems, waste management, limited operating hours and approved structural use.

Modifications to existing structures would not be allowed unless deemed necessary for the function of the business, he said.

MPAJ will also require clear records and data management from all operators.

Hasrolnizam added that campsite operators would have to adhere to the campsite planning guidelines, prepared by the Town and Country

Planning Department.

To date, six operators in Kampung Kemensah have registered their businesses with MPAJ.

Addressing concerns about riverbank modifications and structures built along the river, the former LUAS director clarified that such activities were not explicitly prohibited.

"Take Section 43 of the Luas Enactment 1999 for example, which outlines the powers of the director over river reserve zones and coastal areas.

"The provision is worded in a way that permits modifications, but only with written approval from the relevant authority.

"People want to interact with the river, to be close to it. Our role is to manage that interaction responsibly," he said.

He noted that some ongoing activities in Kampung Kemensah required refinement in terms of structure, operation and location.

"With proper guidelines in place, operators will have a

clear path forward and MPAJ will take action against those who do not comply," he added.

On enforcement, MPAJ has issued 12 compounds and carried out 13 seizures between 2021 and 2025.

The most common offences included operating without a valid business licence and discharging waste into the river.

Violations were recorded under MPAJ Licensing By-laws (2007), Hawker By-laws (2007), Food Establishment By-laws (2007), Local Government Act 1976, and Roads, Drainage and Building Act 1974.

Hasrolnizam said the area's potential as an eco-tourism hub remained high, with MPAJ working with the Selangor Geopark Tourism Taskforce.

"Under MPAJ Local Plan 2035 (Replacement), Kampung Kemensah is zoned primarily for agriculture and housing, but areas with existing business activity have been identified for potential designation as tourism zones.

"The village is also part of the Gombak-Hulu Langat Geopark (GHLGp) and its development could support future recognition under the Unesco Global Geopark programme."

Drawing from international examples such as the Yarra River in Melbourne, Australia and the River Thames in London, England, he stressed that conservation and public use could co-exist when properly managed.

"Preservation does not mean complete restriction.

"The key lies in sustainable use and striking a balance between access and protection," he said. — By BAVANI M and SHALINI RAVINDRAN

THE STAR

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By BAVANI M and
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Kg Kemensah in danger of losing its rustic charm

STAR MPAS
16/6

Villagers say there is a need to balance development with preservation of natural environment and river quality

SOME folk may admire the entrepreneurial spirit of the Kampung Kemensah riverside dining and campsite operators, who have turned natural streams into pretty backdrops for food and leisure in Hulu Kelang, Selangor.

They call it "rustic dining with a view", offering visitors a chance to enjoy a meal while dipping their feet in a cool, flowing stream.

The operators like to show off how they've turned a river into an Instagrammable spot, but behind the pretty pictures, the reality is not quite so charming.

In truth, what they are selling as a rustic getaway could end up having far reaching effects on the environment.

Grease, rubbish and untreated wastewater from various businesses now flow in Sungai Kemensah, affecting the quality of the river.

For Kampung Kemensah village head Zohari Ahmad, whose family was among the early settlers, memories are still crystal clear of a past when the river was so clean that one could drink straight from it.

"That was how pristine the water was when I was growing up in the village.

"Now, everything has changed; we aren't use the water for drinking or washing. We need to do something to preserve the remaining environment," he said.

Zohari's brother, 68-year-old Ismail Ahmad, remembers the river being the heart of the village during childhood, even a source of drinking water.

"The river was our lifeline, our energy booster.

"When we were children, there was no piped water, electricity, phone nor bus service.

"The only television was at the Penghulu's house a few kilometres away so for us children, the river was our whole world," Ismail said.

Zohari recalls businesses began popping up in the village more than 10 years ago. There are now 70 identified businesses, all of them unlicensed, operating in Kampung Kemensah (see sidebar).

While acknowledging the fact that they have brought in work opportunities for locals, he said the challenge now was to strike a balance between development and preservation.

"We want to keep the ecosystem as untouched as possible.

"At the same time, we acknowledge that development is necessary and cannot be stopped.

"Personally, I have no objections to turning this place into a tourist destination, but there must be protections and controls in place," he said.

Fading legacy

Now, some residents say the over-commercialisation of their once-sleepy village is becoming a real worry, not just for the



A quiet section of Sungai Kemensah shows signs of heavy modification, including a concrete embankment and damming, transforming the natural river into a controlled pool for commercial use. — Photos: LOW LAY PHON/The Star

environment, but also for their way of life.

For Ismail and Zohari, the village is not just a home, but their family's legacy and history.

Ismail recounted how his father was given a plot of land to build a house, along with space to grow vegetables and rubber trees, back in the 1960s.

"It was in 1964 when the government launched Kampung Kemensah and invited young families to come live here and grow crops and rubber trees," he said.

There were 48 settlers – the pioneers – whose names are etched on a welcome plaque at the village entrance.

"I remember the then Menteri Besar Harun Idris launching the kampung.

"The young men built wooden houses on plots of about 0.1ha each.

"Today, those wooden houses have become stone houses and you'll find two or three homes on each lot, which were built by the second generation," Ismail said.

But over time, many outsiders began moving into the village, including foreigners who built houses in the area, especially along the riverbanks.

Many of these structures are illegal, with makeshift piping that discharges sewage directly into the river, according to residents.

Zohari said some of the businesses were started by residents, while others were run by outsiders renting land from villagers.

It began with basic chalets,



Wooden dining tables and stools placed in shallow Sungai Kemensah waters. Nearby, a bright yellow banner hung across the stream provides information on another business there.

followed by operators offering trekking activities, all-terrain vehicle (ATV) rides as well as food and beverages.

He noted that economic activities in the village helped locals earn a living.

"Having these businesses here also allows our youths to become entrepreneurs or supplement their income after work or on weekends," he said.

Zohari added that the community had been working with Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) to develop operational guidelines for businesses in Kampung Kemensah.

"MPAJ has conducted a census of the businesses here as part of this effort.

"We have also met with them to provide input on guidelines and standard operating proce-

dures, such as prohibiting unapproved structures along the river and ensuring proper drainage and sewage systems," he explained.

He expressed hope that there would be strict enforcement once the guidelines were implemented.

"Without proper rulings, some operators have taken the opportunity to expand their businesses in ways that could have long-term effects on the environment.

"With guidelines in place, the authorities should take action if the rules are not followed."

As village head, Zohari acknowledged that his authority was limited when it came to any type of enforcement.

"There was one time I tried to advise an operator but they ques-



Ismail remembers the river being a source of drinking water.



Zohari hopes that there will be strict enforcement once guidelines are drawn up.



tioned – 'You siapa (Who are you)?'

"I have to learn to be patient, because if I do not speak up, who will?"

He estimated that about 2,000 people currently live in the village, including 30 Orang Asli families.

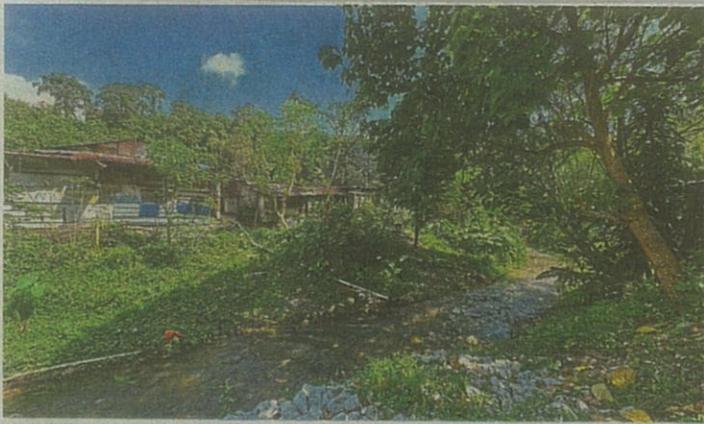
However, he said roughly 40% were squatters, who had built structures along the river and other areas.

One of them is an Indonesian who wanted to be known only as Nawi, 67.

"I came here in 1979 to work on a fruit farm and built a small wooden house by the river.

"Back then, it was just my wife and I," said Nawi, now a grandfather of 16.

Today, that house which has since become a brick house, is



One of the structures built along Sungai Kemensah has a drainage pipe leading straight into the river.

STAR MPJ 2



A restaurant kitchen sits precariously along the banks of Sungai Kemensah, raising eyebrows for its proximity to the water and potential impact on the river's cleanliness.

home to his family including his seven children and their families.

"We are lucky we can earn a living nearby.

"My children and I work with one of the local businesses and we are thankful for that.

"But after all these years, I still hope to be granted permanent citizenship. This is our home," he said.

Similarly, Mona Ahmad, a tech specialist, moved here with her husband Zuri because they love nature.

"We built a home near the river because it gives us that balance we need from our fast-paced, digital lives," said Mona, who lives just a short walk from the riverbank.

"But lately, the commercialisation is getting out of hand.

"We are not against development, but we are strongly against any business that pollutes the river.

"This place is beautiful and we chose it for its peace and greenery, not noise and sewage," she added.

Mother of two Sharon Ling, who recently visited the river dining spot at Kampung Kemensah, said: "I thought it would be a fun, back-to-nature experience for my children as we dip our feet in the river, enjoying a simple meal.

"But I was appalled. I saw people, especially children, throwing rubbish straight into the river, and someone was even washing plates in the same water!

"The place was full of man-made structures like slides, cemented paths and even

boasted a TV.

"I even saw a worker moving river stones to change the river flow for visitors' convenience.

"It didn't feel like nature at all. It felt like a cheap theme park."

When *StarMetro* visited Kampung Kemensah, it was observed that many commercial activities were taking place along the river, which attracts hordes of visitors, especially on the weekend.

If left unchecked, the village risks trading in its natural charm for noise, concrete and chaos.

What drew people here – the river, peace and greenery – may soon be lost and once it's gone, no amount of gushing water or Instagram filters can bring it back.

> Look out for Part 2 tomorrow: Experts weigh in on the potential hazards of riverside businesses.

WATCH THE VIDEO
TheStarTV.com



THE STAR

16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:.....

DBKL's festival showcases 14 orchestral ensembles at 10 venues

By FARID WAHAB
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KUALA Lumpur is set to transform into a vibrant cultural soundscape with the return of Kuala Lumpur Orchestra Festival (FOKL).

Now in its second edition, the festival runs until June 29, taking place at selected venues across the city.

Organised by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), this year's festival showcases 14 local and international orchestral ensembles, bringing together over 1,200 musicians.

"This is not just about music – it's about creating inclusive and impactful cultural experiences," said DBKL Socioeconomic Development executive director Ismadi Sakirin at the festival's pre-launch.

"Beyond contributing to the growth of orchestral music, the festival also enhances KL's reputation as a cultural hub."

Also present at the launch were DBKL Culture, Arts, Tourism and Sport Department



Ismadi says the festival will position Kuala Lumpur as a cultural hub.

director Naquib Hamdan, DBKL Music Unit head Isabella Pek, DBKL Culture, Art, Tourism and Sports senior deputy director Izwan Razif and Kuala Lumpur Society vice-president Jack Lim.

Ismadi noted that FOKL will expand its reach this year, taking place at 10 locations, up from just three last year – an indication of DBKL's growing commitment to the initiative.

Festival venues include Audi-



(Seated, from left) Izwan, Lim, Ismadi, Naquib and Pek at the event's pre-launch in Kuala Lumpur. — Courtesy of DBKL

torium DBKL and Dataran DBKL at DBKL headquarters, DBKL's training institute in Cheras, Dewan Filharmonik PETRONAS, and the River of Life area in Masjid Jamek.

The programme also features workshops led by musicians from across Asia, including Japan, China and Thailand.

To nurture the next generation of talent, the festival will spotlight performances by schoolchildren and youth ensembles.

According to a DBKL statement, over 60 schools have been invited to attend selected performances.

To promote accessibility, DBKL is collaborating with GNB Dis-

abled Welfare Association to ensure people with disabilities can attend the concerts.

FOKL will also include a charity performance in support of the Malaysian Association for the Blind.

Admission is free. For schedule of performances, venues and showtimes, visit fokl.my

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TAM 101-1170
STAR DBKL
16/6 ✓

By FARID WAHAB
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DBKL plan for expedited approvals sparks concern

KUALA Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) has come under fire over its move to expedite the approval process for building plans and applications for development orders.

StarMetro had on June 13 reported that DBKL was working to improve its One-Stop Centre (OSC) to speed up workflow.

Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif had said that DBKL aimed to approve building plans in 21 days and development orders in 42.

"This process will involve closer coordination with 28 external agencies and eight internal departments," she was quoted as saying.

Non-governmental organisation (NGO) Save Kuala Lumpur chairman Datuk M. Ali said the move gave the public the impression that DBKL favoured developers.

"City Hall appears to be making the OSC process more efficient for developers, but what about Kuala Lumpur residents?"

"To ensure transparency, DBKL should also make the OSC portal accessible to the public," said Ali, adding that this would allow the public to find out about potential developments happening around them.

Friends of Bukit Dinding chairman Adrihazim Abdul Rashid said expediting approvals for development projects risked putting further strain on the environment and infrastructure in the capital.

"While it might be good for developers, it may have the opposite impact on those affected by the projects."

Community leaders question move to fast-track building plan, development order approvals



The plan by City Hall to expedite issuance of development orders has drawn brickbats from community leaders. — Filepic

"Do we really need faster project approvals when infrastructure in Kuala Lumpur can barely keep up with development?" asked Adrihazim.

Maimunah had also said that DBKL was working on enhanc-

ing platforms for digital applications, but community activist Yee Poh Ping has raised some concerns.

"Site visits to assess the full impact of a project on surrounding areas must be done before

approvals are issued.

"This is to avoid over-reliance on technical reports that are submitted online, which may not reflect the situation in and around the project site," he said.

On the recently gazetted Kuala



Yee: Site visits crucial to ensure City Hall gets full picture of a project's impact.



Adrihazim: Faster approvals risk further strain on infrastructure.

Lumpur Local Plan 2040, the mayor had said 139 locations in Kuala Lumpur were earmarked for urban renewal projects.

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Tarikh:.....

Story and photo by LEW GUAN XI
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Safety fears over dirty, unlit Jln Tun Razak walkway

STAR
DBK ✓
16/6

A DIRTY and unlit walkway along Jalan Tun Razak, Kuala Lumpur, is sparking safety concerns among regular users.

Elena Mei Yun said a portion of the walkway was not visible to motorists on Jalan Tun Razak as it was blocked by an elevated slip road connected to the Kampung Pandan roundabout.

"The dirty condition and lack of lights at that stretch makes it dark, creepy and prone to unsavoury elements," she said.

Mei, who takes the path to work, added: "I usually use that stretch of walkway before 7am.

"It is still quite dark then, so I am fearful of getting robbed."

During a recent visit, *StarMetro* observed that the walkway was littered with leaves, while the stretch blocked from view by the elevated slip road was also quite narrow.

Mei said she lodged a complaint with Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp) on June 4, requesting the agency clean the walkway.

"Alam Flora Sdn Bhd, the concession company under SWCorp which is responsible for public cleansing work in Kuala Lumpur, then called me to explain that cleaning work for the walkway was not under Kuala Lumpur City Hall's (DBKL) jurisdiction as the highway concessionaire had not surrendered that portion to DBKL," she said.

In a separate email response to Mei, SWCorp reiterated that as the cleaning job for the walkway had not been handed over, the agency was not authorised to

work on the area.

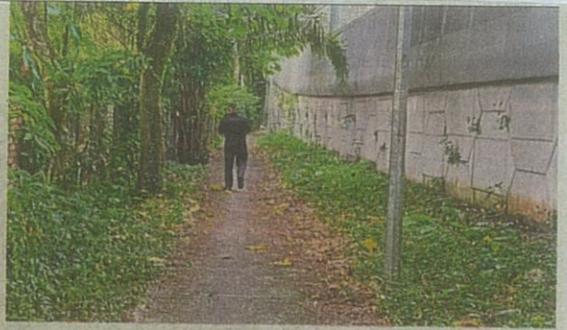
Mei added that she had also lodged a complaint with DBKL about the problem, but was told the same thing – that the highway concessionaire had not surrendered the walkway to them.

"The walkway needs to be cleaned up regularly and made more pedestrian-friendly.

"Street lights should also be installed for pedestrian safety," she said.

Meanwhile, Bike Commute Malaysia director Justin Lee said the walkway was open and clean in 2018 when the elevated slip road was still under construction, citing images captured by Google Maps at the time.

"Like many flyovers that have been introduced recently, pedes-



A pedestrian on a stretch of the walkway along Jalan Tun Razak that is partially blocked from motorists' view by an elevated slip road next to it.

trian space is not considered.

"In this case, pedestrian safety and accessibility are compromised when the walkway is squeezed beside the flyover, which should not have been built alongside walkways," he said.

Lee called for a guideline to

clearly outline the minimum requirements for pedestrian walkways so future projects do not compromise such infrastructure.

StarMetro reached out to DBKL and SWCorp for comments, but neither provided a response at press time.

15 JUN 2025

THE STAR

16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:.....

By VENESA DEVI
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'Assist Johor youths keen on farming'

Starz
16/6 ✓

State urged to support locals towards making agricultural sector more positive and dynamic

THE state government should assist Johor folk, especially youths, to thrive in the agriculture sector, says Kahang assemblyman R. Vidyananthan.

"Many are interested in exploring the field, have good ideas and are willing to work hard.

"However, they do not know where the lands are or who can help them," said the former state executive councillor, adding, "Do they go to the land office or the agriculture department?"

Speaking during the state assembly at Bangunan Sultan Ismail in Kota Iskandar, Vidyananthan said Johor government should develop abandoned lands to carry out suitable agricultural activities.

"The younger generation must be encouraged to get involved in agriculture.

"Their presence will boost the profile of the agricultural sector into one that is more modern, positive and dynamic."

On another issue, he urged the state government to come up with new moves to help reduce the impact of the rising cost of living.

"We cannot resolve the cost-of-living problem by giving a one-

off cash aid.

"There are other sustainable, innovative and empowering efforts that could help the public.

"For example, the state government used to have Kedai Harga Patut Muafakat Johor (imCoop) which were cooperatives offering affordable goods," he said.

"What happened to the initiative? Was it discontinued?"

Other moves he suggested include petrol cards for those with monthly hospital appointments, special skills scholarships, entrepreneurship support and community education centres.

On a separate matter, Vidyananthan said the state government could consider starting an incubator programme for

young Indian entrepreneurs.

"This programme could provide business space and office lots with low rent for a certain period of time.

"Whether they are looking for a place to start their business or are about to embark on their entrepreneurship, they would be eligible to benefit."

The assemblyman added that the government could also help by ensuring the premises are equipped with facilities such as customer service officers, free parking, 24-hour security as well as advertising and signage.

"State government agencies should also plan and identify strategic and business-friendly locations in which to build these business spaces or office lots," he said.

Vidyananthan also stressed the importance of giving Indian contractors, vendors and suppliers a chance to participate in Johor's economic boom, especially with the surge of investments in the Johor-Singapore Special Economic Zone.

"I understand that the government cannot direct investors to award contracts solely to one community but it could provide investors with a list of Indian contractors to ensure inclusivity during the tender selection process.

"This will allow spillover business and job opportunities to be felt by all locals, not just those from outside.

"Johor folk should not end up as mere spectators in their own state's development," he added.



(Above) Vidyananthan says many youths are interested in exploring agriculture but do not know how and where to start. (Right) Filepic of a young farmer at his fruit orchard in Gelang Patah.



THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....

Ministry boosting mental health support in varsities

STAR
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PETALING JAYA: Boosting the number of counsellors at all public universities and developing digital tools to access mental health support are among the measures that will be used to tackle stress and burnout among students.

According to the Higher Education Ministry, it is also looking at developing a holistic guideline on mental health for both public and private institutions that will cover prevention, early intervention, treatment and recovery.

"We support the development of an integrated digital mental health system at the higher learning institution (IPT) level to enable students to access support more quickly, easily and without stigma.

"We also help with the training and professional development of all IPT counsellors so that they are always aware of current issues and modern intervention techniques," the ministry told *The Star*.

This comes as the ministry takes note of student mental health issues with burnout, anxiety and stress, especially from academic and financial pressures, as well as challenges of future career prospects.

"These problems can be caused by various factors such as environmental changes, academic pressures and the cost of living."

In conjunction with National Counselling Month and World Mental Health Day, more than 245 mental health-related programmes and activities were implemented by IPT psychology officers and counsellors in all 20 public universities throughout October last year.

The ministry also collaborates with other departments and agencies to assess the level of mental health of youth and implement intellectual programmes that focus on mental health.

Several initiatives have been established, including free counselling services through counselling units at all public universities, mental health intervention programmes as well as financial and welfare assistance.

"For example, we have introduced the Minda Sihat and Mental Health Literacy and Psychological First Aid programmes to strengthen mental and emotional resilience among students.

"In addition, we have also collaborated with researchers from Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, Malaysian Public University Counselling Council and Malaysian Public University Health Council to develop the Higher Education Institution Student Mental Health Module - Deal with Stress, Depression and Anxiety."

The module is used as a reference for psychological officers and counsellors in managing the mental health issues of university students in a more practical, effective and holistic way.

THE STAR

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

'Local bodies should work together for mutual gain'

COLLABORATIONS among local authorities have the potential to benefit employees' career development and provide opportunities for skill enhancement through workshops and networking, says Malaysian Association of Local Authorities (Mala) president Datuk Abd Hamid Hussain (pic).

"Fostering working partnerships with other local authorities can lead to improved service delivery and broader professional growth," he said.



Abd Hamid, who is Klang mayor, was appointed Mala president on April 25, taking over from Melaka mayor Datuk Shadan Othman.

Abd Hamid said in his two-year tenure, he also planned to enhance sports among local authorities, with a focus on promoting women in sports.

Other than through working partnerships, he said sports could bring about economic benefits, with each council hosting major sporting events, thus boosting inclusive participation and strengthening friendships.

Abd Hamid added that as the new Mala president, he planned to focus on discussing matters with Housing and Local Government Ministry pertaining to career development of local council employees.

More support for youth mental health

STAR
16/6 ✓

KUCHING: The Women, Family and Community Development Ministry is taking a more aggressive stance in tackling youth mental health issues by rolling out a series of early intervention initiatives, including mobile counselling services and local community support centres.

Minister Datuk Seri Nancy Shukri said she is concerned about the rising cases of mental health struggles among young people and is committed to providing accessible support through programmes that involve collaboration with parents, schools and community organisations.

"One of our key efforts is deploying counselling buses to targeted areas, making it easier for youths to access psychological support.

"Many are unaware that they are struggling until they are given an outlet, for example, through art therapy like drawing, which can reveal suppressed emotional distress," she said.

Speaking at a press conference after officiating Kem Kapten Keluarga (Family Captain Camp) in Santubong here yesterday, Nancy stressed that recent tragedies involving adolescents underscore the urgent need for early intervention.

She cited a case in Melaka where a Form Five student allegedly killed his mother and elder brother.

In addition to supporting youth, the ministry is promoting healthi-



Community outreach: Nancy (centre) taking a photo with the participants of the Family Captain Camp organised in conjunction with Fathers Day by LPPKN at Damai Escape Park in Santubong, Sarawak. — Bernama

er family dynamics through initiatives such as "second honeymoon" programmes for married couples and parenting awareness sessions for new parents, she said.

The family camp, held in conjunction with the National Father's Day celebration, was organised by the National Population and Family Development Board (LPPKN) and attended by LPPKN chairperson Datuk Seri Rohani Abdul Karim.

Nancy also urged the public to

overcome stigma around mental health and to speak up or seek help when in need.

"In Sarawak, for example, there are many forms of support available for students and communities. What matters most is to talk, whether it is with a friend, a relative or someone you trust," she said in a Bernama report.

In her speech at the event, Nancy highlighted the growing demands placed on fathers in today's fast-paced society, where

emotional, intellectual and social involvement is expected alongside traditional roles.

Quoting findings from the 2024 Father's Day Public Opinion Survey, she noted that nine out of 10 fathers admitted that parenting today is far more challenging than in previous generations.

"The top concerns among fathers are the high cost of living at 84.4%, and the struggle to maintain work-life balance (72.9%)," she added.

THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....

'No SST on residential units'

STAR
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Nga: Exemption is dependent on land title, property's intended use

PETALING JAYA: Residential properties sold under the Housing Development Act (HDA) are exempted from the Sales and Services Tax (SST), says Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming (*pic*).

He said the exemption is determined based on either the land title or the intended use of the property.

"This means all residential units, including serviced apartments on commercial titles, are

exempted from SST as long as they are intended for residential use and fall under the HDA," Nga said in a statement yesterday.

The clarification follows Nga's consultation with Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan amid

concerns raised by industry stakeholders over the revised SST framework.



To address the issue of cascading taxes, Nga said a business-to-business exemption has been implemented to ensure service tax is applied only once along the supply chain.

According to the Finance Ministry, essential construction materials such as cement, aggregates and sand

remain subjected to a 0% sales tax.

Of the 400 tariff codes related to building materials, only eight, covering items such as vats, laminated glass and netting, have seen an increase in sales tax.

This accounts for just 2% of the total codes.

Contractors may also separate material and service charges in their billing, ensuring service tax applies only to the construction services provided.

Nga stressed that his ministry

will continue working closely with the Finance Ministry and key stakeholders to ensure the fair implementation of tax policies, safeguard home buyers' interests and support a stable and sustainable housing sector.

"In line with the Madani aspirations, the ministry remains committed to preserving housing affordability and protecting the interests of home buyers under the revised SST framework," he added.

THE STAR

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

Ensuring govt info is disseminated promptly

STAR
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LUMUT: Information on key government policies must be disseminated to Madani Communities within 24 hours of their announcement, the Information Department was told.

Communications Minister

Datuk Fahmi

Fadzil (*pic*) said

the move is crucial

to ensure the communi-

ties receive

accurate and

verified information

promptly.

"The task I have given to the

Information Department is to

ensure that Madani Communities

become the first group to receive

accurate information on any

announced policy.

"It is a heavy responsibility, but

this is our role moving forward,"

he said at an event yesterday,

Bername reported.

Madani Community is a multi-

racial volunteer body managed

by the Information Department to

instil good values and love for the

country among the people.

There are 1,878 Madani

Communities, whose responsibility

is also to channel verified govern-

ment information and initiatives

swiftly to the grassroots.



THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....

By STEVEN SIM CHEE KEONG

WHILE observing the later stages of the second industrial revolution, a century ago, English writer Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem describing the era's strange technologies, capable of doing so many human tasks:

"We can pull and haul and push
and lift and drive,
We can print and plough and
weave and heat and light.
We can run and race and swim
and fly and dive,
We can see and hear and count
and read and write!"

At the same time, in that poem, *The Secret of the Machines*, he warned that these technologies were anything but human. For example, they cannot distinguish truth from lies, "neither love nor pity nor forgive".

For many of us today, artificial intelligence (AI) is as exciting and strange as Kipling's machines were for his time. AI promises much potential in augmenting human productivity but it also raises fears about alienating humans from what we do best within the naturally created order - our sapiential capability, the ability to acquire knowledge, form insights and make judgments.

Seventeen months ago, when I first assumed office as Human Resources Minister, the things that kept me awake at night were not cold abstract theories or dusty policy manuals. They were everyday conversations with ordinary Malaysians - from corporate leaders and white-collar workers to gig workers and street vendors, wondering if their jobs would last.

At the heart of these conversations were three difficult but necessary questions:

- > Can I secure meaningful employment?
- > Can I earn a dignified living?
- > Will my role remain relevant in a world increasingly shaped by machines?

In the face of AI and rapid digitalisation, these are questions that are already being asked in every corner of our society.

Grounded in data

Technological change is reshaping the core of our economies. In Malaysia, we began by grounding our understanding of this shift in evidence rather than assumption.

Talent Corporation Malaysia Bhd (TalentCorp), an agency under the Human Resources Ministry (Kesuma), undertook a national study on the impact of AI, digitalisation and the green economy on the workforce. We wanted a clear-eyed view of what lies ahead.

The study found that approximately 620,000 jobs are at high risk of being replaced or becoming obsolete due to automation. Workers currently in these roles will require cross-skilling, upskilling or even reskilling.

But this is not a doomsday account. The study also identified 60 emerging roles, with 70% of these roles being in AI and digital technologies. These will create hundreds of thousands of new jobs - roles that are no longer theoretical.

They are already appearing in job listings, and some countries are producing workers who are more equipped to fill them.

SECURING FUTURES IN THE AI ECONOMY

STAR

1616

Kesuma, TalentCorp align skills with future needs



Sim delivering his plenary speech at the 113th session of the International Labour Conference in Geneva, Switzerland.

From concern to strategy

The way forward is obvious: to ensure our workers are equipped with the skills to adapt to economic trends.

Malaysia spent an annual outlay of RM10bil (US\$2.4bil) for skills-related education and training, with about 30% of the funds coming from a statutory levy upon private corporations to be utilised for training their workers.

To facilitate government, corporate and individual decision-making in the area of skills development, we introduced MyMahir. This national digital platform offers real-time insights into job trends, skill requirements and training opportunities.

We also established the Future Skills Talent Council to strengthen partnerships between industry and government.

These sector-based, industry-led councils ensure that skill standards are informed by those who understand the realities of the shop floor and server room.

In the first year of setting up the council, workers trained under its skills programmes received a 12% higher mean wage compared to the national average.

Our aim is to establish "skill universities" that are accessible,

"As we attempt to comprehend the present and predict the future, one thing is certain: humans write the manual for technology."

Steven Sim

industry-aligned and provide qualifications on par with traditional degrees.

An international effort

Malaysia's challenges are mirrored across Asean. Our economies are growing and our populations are young but our education and labour systems must catch up with technological demands.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that Asean could create up to 30 million green jobs by 2030 with the

right reforms. That future cannot be realised by any one country alone.

During Malaysia's Asean chairmanship, we will be organising and hosting the Asean Year of Skills (AYOS) 2025, supported by the ILO. This will not only guide deeper regional conversations on human capital development but will direct practical resources towards it.

For a start, in June 2025, Malaysia aims to open up our annual National Training Week, offering 65,000 high-quality skills training courses by both local and global brands to all citizens of Asean. This is our investment in regional human capital development with the aspiration to make Asean the most skilled region in the world.

We are proud to partner with the World Economic Forum to co-chair the Gender Parity in the Future of Work Accelerator in Malaysia, which seeks to empower female talent in this age of AI.

It aligns with our national Madani Economic Framework's goal to increase female labour force participation. It will propose evidence-based policy recommendations to enhance women's economic empowerment in the labour market.

Human dignity

As we attempt to comprehend the present and predict the future, one thing is certain: humans write the manual for technology. Kipling ended his poem on a reassuring note - we are in control of technology and not the other way around:

"Though our smoke may hide
the Heavens from your eyes,
It will vanish and the stars will
shine again,
Because, for all our power and
weight and size,
We are nothing more than chil-
dren of your brain!"

Ultimately, the question is not how evolving technology will impact people's lives but how government policy can consistently empower and uplift them.

As I reflect on those early days in office, I realise that the questions that kept me up at night were never just about jobs or wages. They were about dignity and ensuring that no one was left behind.

This article is by Human Resources Minister Steven Sim Chee Keong and was first published by the World Economic Forum.

Malaysia's food security at risk

Report shows low self-sufficiency levels for key produce

STR
16/6

By SHYAFIQ DZULKIFLI
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysia's food security goals are falling short, with data showing the country remains heavily dependent on imports for key produce like beef, mutton, cabbage and chilli.

Latest data from the 2024 Agriculture Census Interim Report showed that the self-sufficiency level (SSL) for cattle and buffalo meat stood at just 15.9% in 2023, far below the 35.5% projected under the National Agrofood Policy 2.0 (DAN 2.0) and well short of its 50% target by this year.

This is due to small-scale cattle operations and a lack of local breeding stock, said Universiti Putra Malaysia's Agriculture Faculty dean Prof Dr Loh Teck Chwen.

"Malaysia currently lacks suffi-

cient breeders and parent stock for cattle, which is why we continue to import beef to meet domestic demand.

"This dependence on imported beef drives up prices. Beef now costs around RM35 per kilogram, which is increasingly unaffordable for many households."

Loh said the livestock sector faces multiple structural constraints, including the rising cost of imported feed such as corn and soy, limited land availability and labour shortages.

Agricultural economist Prof Datuk Dr Mad Nasir Shamsudin said despite attempts to integrate livestock rearing in oil palm plantations, uptake from estate operators remains weak.

"We have about nine million hectares of oil palm and there is a huge potential to integrate livestock rearing under oil palm plantations.

"But response from plantation

owners hasn't been encouraging."

Other livestock categories show similar under-performance.

The SSL for sheep and goat meat remained stagnant at 10.6% in 2023, from 10.9% in 2018.

The report also highlighted shortfalls in some vegetable production like round cabbage and chilli, falling below the 50% SSL threshold, although both have shown improvement over the years.

The self-sufficiency level for round cabbage increased to 41% in 2023, up from 38.7% in 2018.

Chilli rose to 37.1% from 31.9% over the same period, indicating that nearly two-thirds of local demand still relies on imports.

According to the Agriculture and Food Security Ministry's website, a total of RM27.59bil had been allocated to support the agriculture industry since 2021.

Loh said there is urgency to attract youths into modern farm-

ing as it is a major concern that many farmers are ageing.

"We need to make agriculture more attractive, or in other words, 'sexy'," he said, acknowledging that many young people preferred office jobs or flexible gig work over traditional farming.

"There's a prevailing negative perception of agriculture that must be addressed."

According to Prof Mad Nasir, three strategic pillars must be prioritised, namely policy intervention, technology adoption and facility support.

"Return on investment for food security should not be viewed in ringgit and sen alone.

"Food production delivers social returns which ensure national stability and access to food in times of crisis," he said.

He said that technology, while widely promoted in recent government initiatives, had yet to see widespread uptake.

Despite the availability of modern farming tools and systems, he said their adoption remained limited due to gaps in human capital and entrepreneurship.

"We need to treat food production as a business, operated by skilled entrepreneurs who can scale and innovate.

"Look at the oil palm industry and how advanced it has become. More than 70% of production comes from plantations.

"The plantations are commercialised with estate managers, high-tech systems and large listed companies," he added.

Prof Mad Nasir said supportive infrastructure and financing are equally essential to the transformation.

He urged financial institutions to become more approachable and responsive.

"We must offer grants and facilities to empower the next generation of agricultural entrepreneurs."

THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....

Govt should expand food aid programmes, says Fomca

STH
W16 ✓

PETALING JAYA: The findings on food inflation over the decades by the Statistics Department (DOSM) is a call to action for reforms, says the Federation of Malaysian Consumers Associations (Fomca).

"Either we reform now, or we risk deepening inequality, worsening malnutrition, and undermining Malaysia's economic and social resilience," said secretary-general Saravanan Thambirajah.

He was commenting on the department's report that found a threefold increase in food prices in the past five decades.

"We must ensure every Malaysian has affordable access to nutritious, safe, and culturally appropriate food, regardless of income level or geography.

"For that, consumer empowerment must be matched by bold policy shifts, inclusive fiscal planning, and sustained political will. Only then can we build a resilient, just, and food-secure Malaysia for



Grow your food: Urban farming and community agriculture can help lower a household's food cost.

the next generation."

Saravanan said the B40 and M40 segments are using multiple coping strategies which are not sustainable in the long term.

They include borrowing money or using Buy Now, Pay Later (BNPL) option to afford groceries and switching to lower quality

food such as instant noodles and ultra-processed goods.

"Some families have been skipping meals or reducing portion sizes, while others have been working longer hours or taking multiple jobs to compensate for rising costs.

"Families have also been reduc-

ing spending on healthcare, education and other essentials to pay for food. These trade-offs affect long-term health, education outcomes and social stability."

To tackle this, Saravanan said the government should expand food assistance programmes such as Sumbangan Tunai Rahmah (STR), Food Bank Malaysia and targeted food vouchers, especially for urban poor households.

"There must also be price ceilings and buffer stock for critical items like rice, cooking oil, eggs and chicken to protect consumers from sudden price spikes.

"Regulate middlemen and enforce fair pricing in wet markets and retail outlets through more frequent monitoring by the Domestic Trade and Cost of Living Ministry," he said.

He said school-based nutrition programmes must be revised and subsidised healthy meals must be given to schoolchildren to relieve household food burdens and

address malnutrition.

He said the urban farming and community agriculture, which empower families to grow their own vegetables with the support of local councils and state governments, must be encouraged.

Saravanan said Fomca urged that Malaysia's fiscal priorities be aligned with food sovereignty and resilience.

"The country must move from a dependency model to a self-reliant and climate-adaptive food system.

"That means prioritising substantial infrastructure investment in irrigation, food storage and logistics. Land zoning protections to prevent loss of farmland to housing and industry," he said.

Saravanan said there must be budget allocation for research, subsidies for local producers, and price support schemes for critical crops like rice, vegetables and fish, adding that the relevant agencies must be strengthened as well.

THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....

Food inflation burning a hole in household budgets

Star
16/6

By RAGANANTHINI
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PETALING JAYA: Malaysian households paid RM100 for food items in 2024, while the same amount of foodstuff could be bought at RM30.90 in 1980 – no thanks to food inflation.

According to a report by the Statistics Department (DOSM), the threefold increase in food prices in the past five decades also saw the purchasing power of Malaysian households decline by 69.1%.

The Food Security report released last month said a big portion of households expenditure went into purchasing daily necessities.

For instance, a B40 household with monthly income below RM5,250 would allocate 71.6% of

the expenditure for daily necessities.

An M40 household earning between RM5,250 and RM11,819 would spend 67% while a T20 home earning over RM11,820 allocated 64%.

The F&B segment was one of the main reasons why the Consumer Price Index (CPI) grew by 3.2% between 2010 and 2024.

The price increase influenced spending patterns as basic necessities such as rice, vegetables, chicken, meat and eggs would have become more expensive.

"This would make households reduce their expenditure on non-essential items such as clothing, entertainment and travel to cover the high cost of food.

"All subgroups under the Food & Beverage category recorded a decline in purchasing power ranging from 20.1% to 39.2% between

2010 and 2024," said the report.

Fish and seafood products are the most affected subgroup, whereby purchasing power had declined 39.2% due to annual inflation averaging at 3.6%.

While prices of goods and services continued to increase, household income was not growing at the same rate, therefore reducing purchasing power. This forces households to make an adjustment to their spending patterns.

"These changes in spending behaviour can lead to a decline in purchasing power and may negatively affect family well-being. Households tend to prioritise essential items, such as food, rent, utility bills and transportation.

"On a monthly basis, the average Malaysian household spent RM841 (16.3%) of their total average monthly household expenditure (RM5,150) on the Food &

Beverage category in 2022. This was the highest average expenditure among all categories," it said.

As inflation in this category rises, it directly burdens households, especially due to the increase in food prices, which affects their daily lives, it added.

As a result, healthy food becomes more costly, prompting households to gravitate towards unhealthy and less nutritious food which is pocket-friendly.

"When food prices increase faster than household income, food security can be significantly affected," the report said.

"Limited access to food is expected to contribute to a rise in malnutrition, anaemia, diabetes, obesity, and other nutrition-related diseases, as households may be forced to consume unbalanced diets due to affordability issues."

Geopolitical conflict between

Ukraine and Russia, which are major exporters of grains and fertiliser, also had a hand in driving global food inflation.

"These supply disruptions have especially impacted the rising cost of livestock and agricultural inputs, particularly for chicken and vegetables.

"The effects are reflected in the average annual inflation for chicken, which rose by 2.5% (2010-2024), with the highest increase recorded in 2022 at 10.0%.

In addition, unpredictable weather in major chicken feed-producing countries like Brazil, Argentina and India has indirectly influenced feed prices.

Meanwhile, vegetable inflation also rose by an average of 3.2% annually, with the highest increase recorded in 2022 at 5.5%, added the report.

THE STAR

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Tarikh:.....



Some companies are using computer vision to monitor leftover food, providing data that helps kitchens identify which ingredients to cut back on. — Freepik

AI takes on food waste

By ANGELIN YEOH
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YOU have your safety belt on. About an hour into the flight, hunger kicks in. You reach for the inflight menu, and a pack of nasi lemak catches your eye. Maybe it's the sambal, or it's the idea of enjoying a familiar local favourite at 30,000 feet in the air. Either way, it sounds perfect. You make a request.

Then the flight attendant breaks your heart: "Sorry, we've run out."

Such a situation is not unfamiliar to most airline passengers. When it comes to inflight meal planning, Catherine Goh — the CEO behind Santan, official inflight caterer for AirAsia — explains that there are a lot of factors to consider. Teams behind inflight meal planning relied on experience, historical data and rough estimates to not only decide how much nasi lemak to prepare but also estimate how many passengers would likely choose vegetarian options or prefer to have coffee instead of tea.

"There was a lot of guesswork around passenger preferences, last-minute cancellations, and unexpected bookings. This approach often led to challenges such as overstocking — resulting in waste — or understocking, which left some passengers disappointed," Goh says in an interview with LifestyleTech.

She adds that flight delays or changes also added more complexity to an already delicate balancing act.

"On top of that, we had to consider the stock required for every single flight, accounting for different routes, turnaround times, and return legs — all of which influence the catering load," she says.

With over 1,200 flights daily

Unlike traditional methods, AI allows us to factor in a wide range of dynamic variables — such as passenger demographics, travel and booking patterns, historical food preferences by route, meal-time segments, and even cultural events like festivities or the fasting month.

Catherine Goh

in five regions, Goh says managing inflight food waste is one of their biggest challenges.

According to cabin waste audits commissioned by the International Air Transport Association (IATA) published in May, 34% of waste generated on flights comes from untouched food and beverages. The sector is estimated to be incinerating resources worth US\$6bil (RM24.40bil) annually.

To address this, airlines and catering providers are being urged to improve planning and logistics to reduce cabin waste and contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal of halving global food waste by 2030.

Goh concedes that forecasting demand based on static or generic data is simply not sustainable.

"That's what drove us to explore AI-powered demand planning. Unlike traditional methods, AI allows us to factor in a wide range of dynamic variables — such as passenger demographics, travel and booking patterns, historical food preferences by route, meal-time segments, and even cultural events like festivities or the fasting month," she adds.

Connecting the dots with data

According to Goh, Santan is currently testing an AI-powered demand planning tool built on a robust datasheet consisting of historical flight-level sales and loading data — capturing both pre-Covid trends and recent post-Covid recovery behaviours.

"Specifically, it has been trained using over three years of historical data, enhanced with the latest six months of operational insights and up to 12 months of forward-looking pre-booking forecasts,"

she says, adding that it gives the model more historical depth and real-time relevance.

Goh shares that there is a broad spectrum of variables to be analysed including passenger numbers, routes and seasonability trends, nationalities, meal time segments and flight departure times.

"For instance, it can identify how meal preferences shift not just by destination, but also based on time of day or passenger mix — insights that are nearly impossible to act on through traditional planning," she adds.

By looking at the system's recommendations for menu mixes, Goh says it has led to the company being able to offer meals that better match their passengers' expectations during peak travel times. Even with changes like flight delays or cancellations or a spike in last-minute bookings, Goh says the AI can quickly recalculate expected demand.

"It is designed with real-world operational flexibility. This agility allows our supply chain and cabin crew teams to make timely adjustments — whether it's modifying loading volumes or ensuring we reserve popular items that are likely to be in demand," she adds.

Since the system was implemented, Goh says it has been "showing promising results", with forecast accuracy improving to over 95%. This has led to a noticeable drop in both

This visual is human-created, AI-aided

STAR 16/6 ✓

overstocking and understocking of inflight food items.

"Inflight food waste has dropped by 20% over the past year – a clear win for both efficiency and operational performance.

We've also seen better alignment between forecasted and actual demand, enabling more informed decision-making across our supply chain," she says.

The AI system was developed in-house using the airline's central data infrastructure. Goh says all data is encrypted and access is strictly governed through its group-level data governance framework to ensure compliance and protection across all touchpoints.

"Developing the tool internally has also allowed us to fine-tune the system closely to operational realities. It has already delivered encouraging outcomes in live environments, and we're now preparing to scale it across the fleet to unlock greater precision and efficiency in our meal planning processes," she adds.

Dining with data

Turning data into actionable insights that could translate to better ways to manage food waste isn't new. Back in 2020, Etihad Airways announced that it was partnering with Singapore food tech startup Lumitics to trial the use of computer vision and machine learning to track uneaten economy class meals. The goal was to highlight food consumption and wastage patterns across the network.

With the integration of AI into broader systems, its capabilities have steadily advanced. A 2024 review published in the peer-reviewed journal *Food Chemistry: X* highlights how AI-powered tools such as deep learning and advanced robotics can greatly enhance food safety, improve quality, and boost efficiency throughout the supply chain.

It highlighted the potential of AI to enhance food waste management through "predictive algorithms" that could help to



Despite its promise, widespread adoption of AI to reduce waste in the food industry faces several hurdles including implementation cost and ethical concerns. — Freepik



In Malaysia, Hilton Hotels announced that it adopted Winnow's AI-powered solution to help reduce wastage during Ramadan. — Hilton Hotels

minimise overproduction and spoilage.

An example cited in the article is the system by Winnow Solutions, featuring smart scales and image recognition technology to help kitchens reduce waste by pointing towards the source and adjusting portion sizes.

In Malaysia, Hilton Hotels announced that it adopted Winnow's AI-powered solution to help reduce wastage during Ramadan – a period when hotel buffets are typically more extensive and prone to excess. The system generated reports providing details on the most wasted ingredients, waste patterns and guest demographics to help kitchen teams make precise adjustments during food preparation.

The company claimed that last year, the same AI-powered initiative led to a 64% reduction in food waste at two

hotels in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor.

Other companies that have adopted AI to monitor food waste have also started sharing some interesting insights. Last year, Air New Zealand chief customer and sales officer Leanne Geraghty shared in an interview that AI was used to analyse 30,000 photos of food trays on flights coming from Los Angeles and Hong Kong.

She told news.com.au that findings revealed that passengers didn't like beetroot hummus as an entree and blue cheese. The next step is to take measures to remove unpopular ingredients and deliver products that customers want, adding the AI-driven insights are helpful to reduce food waste.

A few obstacles remain

Despite its promise, widespread adoption of AI to reduce waste in the food industry faces several hurdles. The same review published in the *Food Chemistry: X* journal cited implementation costs, data security concerns, and the complexity of integrating with legacy systems as major barriers.

There are also ethical concerns, including privacy and fairness in algorithmic decision-making, that need to be carefully addressed. For AI to play a broader role in curbing food waste, clearer regulations, greater transparency, and more

affordable solutions to enable smaller players are essential, according to the report.

Rolling out a new tech-driven system also takes more than just software – it requires people to trust that the technology will deliver real results.

Goh says change management was key to successful adoption.

"We conducted hands-on workshops with our demand planners, supply chain and operations teams to walk them through how the model works and why it's reliable," she adds.

Visual dashboards were introduced to compare forecasts with actual outcomes over time.

"Seeing the model's accuracy in action helped build trust organically and empowered our teams to make data-driven decisions with greater confidence," Goh says.

The CEO also believes there is more potential for the system beyond inflight meals, including ground-based food services and group-level catering operations. As the company continues to evolve, Goh expects technology to drive ongoing green initiatives.

"AI empowers us to make smarter, faster decisions that reduce waste and boost efficiency, which are key pillars of our environmental responsibility efforts. We're integrating predictive analytics with procurement and eco-friendly packaging choices to further lower our carbon footprint," she says.

Don't wait until it's too late

STAR 16/6

M'sians urged to go for regular health check-ups

SEREMBAN: The relatively low level of health literacy among some Malaysians is one of the key reasons they avoid regular health screenings, including for non-communicable diseases (NCDs), cancer and mental health, says Health Minister Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad.

He said most people only seek treatment once a disease has been identified or has progressed to a more serious stage, rather than going for early check-ups.

That is why, he said, it is important for the public to take care of their health and that of their family members by undergoing health screenings, followed by appropriate interventions and treatment.

"This is why the Health Ministry, under the National Health Screening Initiative, emphasises

screenings not only for NCDs but also for cancer and mental health," he told reporters after opening the Paroi constituency's Healthy Mind, Prosperous Community Carnival here yesterday.

Also present was Negri Sembilan Health Department director Dr Zuraida Mohamed.

Citing the latest National Health and Morbidity Survey, Dzulkefly said that one in three adult Malaysians suffers from high blood pressure, one in three has high cholesterol and one in six has diabetes, with 50% facing obesity.

"That is why I want to see greater awareness of the importance of health screenings. I hope these efforts are well received by the people.

"We have initiatives like Peka



Healthy habits: Dzulkefly encouraging people to get their health screenings at the Paroi constituency's Healthy Minds Prosperous Community Carnival at Masjid Kariah in Taman Bandar Senawang, Negri Sembilan. — Bernama

B40, Komuniti Sihat Pembina Negara and services at district health offices," he said, Bernama reported.

Meanwhile, Dzulkefly said that Covid-19 cases in the country remain under control and below

the national alert level, with an average of 600 cases per week.

The Health Ministry, he added, will continue to monitor the situation.

When asked about the need for Malaysians to get an additional

dose of the Covid-19 vaccine following a rise in cases in a neighbouring country, he said there is no need to make it mandatory at this time, but advised the public to continue observing preventive measures.

THE STAR

16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:.....

1,194 kes denggi di Petaling Jaya

Sebanyak 19 lokaliti wabak dikenal pasti termasuk dua titik panas

Oleh SITI AISYAH MOHAMAD
PETALING JAYA

SH
MBPJ
16/6

Sebanyak 1,194 kes demam denggi dilaporkan di Petaling Jaya bagi tempoh Januari hingga awal Jun tahun ini dengan 19 lokaliti wabak dikenal pasti termasuk dua yang diklasifikasikan sebagai titik panas.

Datuk Bandar Petaling Jaya, Mohamad Zahri Samingon berkata, jumlah kes itu mencatatkan peningkatan sebanyak 18 peratus berbanding minggu sebelumnya.

Menurutnya, daerah Petaling merupakan antara kawasan dengan kes tertinggi di

Selangor manakala Damansara Damai dikenal pasti sebagai penyumbang utama kes di bawah pentadbiran pihak berkuasa tempatan (PBT) itu.

Katanya, terdapat 15 kelompok perumahan bertingkat merangkumi 14,477 unit kediaman dengan kepadatan penduduk yang tinggi menjadi faktor risiko penularan denggi di kawasan berkenaan.

"Sebanyak 480 kes telah direkodkan di Damansara Damai pada 2024, berbanding 98 kes setakat awal Jun tahun ini. Apartment Idaman pula mencatatkan jumlah tertinggi dengan 73 kes pada 2024 dan 24 kes hingga Mei 2025.

"Meskipun terdapat penurunan, MBPJ menegaskan bahawa aktiviti kawalan perlu diteruskan secara konsisten bagi mengelakkan pembiakan nyamuk Aedes dan mencegah peningkatan semula wabak," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian ketika ditemui di Majlis Sambutan Hari Denggi ASEAN 2025 yang diada-



Mohamad Zahri (kanan) meninjau aktiviti yang disediakan ketika Majlis Sambutan Hari Denggi ASEAN 2025 yang diadakan di Apartment Idaman, Damansara Damai pada Ahad.

kan di Apartment Idaman, Damansara Damai, di sini pada Ahad.

Hadir sama, Timbalan Datuk Bandar Petaling Jaya, Aznan Hassan dan Timbalan Pengarah Kesihatan (MBPJ), Mahzura Mohd Amin.

Untuk rekod, program yang berlangsung merupakan antara 31 pengisian MBPJ sempena sambutan ulang tahun ke-19 dengan acara kemuncak akan diadakan pada 21 Jun ini di Menara MBPJ.

Mohamad Zahri berkata, program yang menghimpunkan pe-

nyertaan agensi kerajaan, swasta, pertubuhan bukan kerajaan (NGO) dan komuniti setempat itu sebagai salah satu usaha untuk memperkukuh kesedaran dalam membanteras penularan denggi.

Jelasnya, antara pengisian program termasuk ceramah kesedaran denggi, aktiviti mencari harta karun, senamrobik, saringan kesihatan, pertandingan mewarna, pameran agensi kerajaan dan badan bukan kerajaan (NGO), Eco Free Market, pertandingan kutipan sampah terbanyak serta pembelian minyak masak terpakai.

"Aktiviti ini bukan sahaja menyampaikan mesej berkaitan kesihatan dan kebersihan, malah menggalakkan penyertaan aktif masyarakat dalam memelihara persekitaran yang sihat dan selamat.

"Usaha membanteras wabak denggi bukan hanya tanggungjawab PBT semata-mata tetapi memerlukan kesedaran, kerjasama dan tindakan berterusan seluruh komuniti," ujarnya.

SINAR HARIAN
Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025.....

Menteri, pegawai diarah turun padang tangani isu rakyat

SH 166

LUMUT - Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim menggesa semua menteri, pegawai tertinggi di peringkat Persekutuan serta kerajaan negeri malah pelaksana dasar dan projek untuk kerap turun padang bagi memahami setiap masalah yang dihadapi rakyat.

Menurutnya, tindakan itu juga perlu dilaksana oleh semua ahli Parlimen bagi memastikan setiap isu penduduk setempat dapat ditangani dengan lebih baik dan menyeluruh.

"Malah penjawat awam yang kanan pun kita minta turun ke bawah, sebab itu kita ada Sejati Madani dan Kampung Angkat Madani di mana pegawai-pegawai tinggi termasuk menteri tahu ada *disconnect* atau perbezaan ungkapan dasar dengan apa yang kita laksanakan di peringkat bawah.

"Bila kita turun ke bawah, kita bincang soal pendidikan, pengangguran, dadah, kemudahan kesihatan dan projek ekonomi, jadi semua isu itu

mesti ditangani dengan baik kerana apabila dengar masalah itu, mungkin ia lain di peringkat pusat dan negeri," katanya.

Perdana Menteri turut menekankan kepentingan mendengar keluhan rakyat secara langsung seperti menerusi penganjuran

Program Madani Rakyat (PMR) kebanyakan sekolah dan isu



ANWAR

atau sesi dialog antara pemimpin dan rakyat bagi mendapatkan maklum balas perkara yang perlu diperbaiki atau ditambah baik dalam setiap projek pembangunan.

Sebagai contoh, Anwar berkata, beliau memperoleh maklumat mengenai masalah tandas rosak di

capaian internet di institusi pengajian tinggi melalui pertemuannya dengan orang ramai menerusi program menyantuni rakyat di warung makan mahupun solat Jumaat.

"Kita bercakap tentang kecerdasan buatan, digitalisasi, dan sebagainya tetapi masih terdapat isu tandas rosak dan tiada internet, itu percanggahan besar sebab kita mahu sediakan masa depan yang canggih jadi prasarana asas mesti diselesaikan dahulu," katanya. -*Bernama*

SINAR HARIAN

Tarikh: ...16 JUN 2025.....

Tangkap siapa sahaja terlibat rasuah

SH
16/6

LUMUT - Perdana Menteri, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim mengulangi pendirian tegas kerajaan dalam memerangi rasuah dan penyelewengan dengan memberi jaminan, tiada sesiapa akan dilindungi sama ada dari blok kerajaan, pembangkang atau bekas pemimpin terdahulu.

Menurut Anwar, kerajaan di bawah pimpinannya tidak akan menghalang mana-mana siasatan atau tangkapan oleh Suruhanjaya Pencegahan Rasuah Malaysia (SPRM), asalkan individu yang terlibat benar-benar melakukan kesalahan.

"Tangkap hari-hari pun saya tak peduli. Saya tidak halang...ini ada yang kata nak tangkap di Sabah lagi.

"Tangkaplah siapa sahaja, orang Kerajaan Perpaduan, orang pembangkang atau yang dah pencen pun. Asalkan betul dia curi, tangkaplah," katanya.

Memberi contoh beberapa kes melibatkan bekas menteri yang dikaitkan dengan skandal kewangan bernilai berbilion ringgit, ujarinya, masih ada antara mereka cuba mendapat simpati masyarakat dengan alasan usia dan status.

Tambah Anwar, kerajaan Madani yang dipimpinnya akan terus mempertahankan tatakelola pentadbiran yang betul dan berpegang kepada prinsip ketelusan tanpa kompromi.

Katanya, ini termasuklah budaya sakau dan pemberian projek tanpa tender yang perlu dihentikan kerana merosakkan integriti pentadbiran dan menafikan hak rakyat terhadap perkhidmatan yang lebih baik.

"Saya nak kutip balik siapa sahaja yang curi daripada negara ini. Itu dasar kita. Jadi saya harap bagilah kerjasama supaya kita dapat teruskan kerja dengan baik," ujarinya.

Tegas Anwar, beliau tidak berendam terhadap individu yang pernah menganiayanya secara peribadi, namun berbeza jika melibatkan harta negara.

SINAR HARIAN

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

'Kerajaan tak perlu segan akui kelebihan GST'

SH 16/6



DR MUHAMAD AKMAL

SHAH ALAM – Kerajaan digesa untuk 'tidak segan' mengakui kelebihan sistem Cukai Barang dan Perkhidmatan (GST) yang jauh lebih baik dan tidak membebankan rakyat.

Ketua Pemuda UMNO, Datuk Dr Muhamad Akmal Saleh berkata, pelaksanaan GST pada kadar enam peratus sebelum ini tidak membebankan rakyat berbanding sistem Cukai Jualan dan Perkhidmatan (SST) yang diamalkan sekarang.

"Dulu GST enam peratus bebankan rakyat. Sekarang rakyat perlu bayar SST (lima atau 10 peratus cukai jualan dan enam peratus cukai perkhidmatan) ditambah dengan pe-

ngurangan jenis barangan bercukai daripada 8,084 kepada 1,813 barang," katanya dalam hantaran di Facebook pada Ahad.

Terdahulu, Kementerian Kewangan dalam kenyataan memaklumkan kerajaan akan melaksanakan semakan semula kadar Cukai Jualan dan peluasan skop Cukai Perkhidmatan secara bersasar berkuat kuasa 1 Julai ini, selaras dengan pengumuman Belanjawan 2025 pada Oktober tahun lalu.

Langkah itu bertujuan mengukuhkan kedudukan fiskal negara dengan meningkatkan hasil dan meluaskan asas percukaian, tanpa membebankan rakyat terbanyak.

5 hingga 10 peratus, cukai perkhidmatan 8 peratus

- Kurang telus kerana membolehkan segelintir pihak pengimport, pengilang, pemborong, atau peruncit tidak mengisytiharkan cukai sepatutnya melalui pindahan harga.
- Kos pentadbiran lebih rendah.
- Harga mungkin dinaikkan secara tersembunyi.

- Sistem cukai baharu GST adalah pada kadar 6 peratus dan ia bukan cukai tambahan kepada cukai sedia ada.
- Lebih telus (dalam resit) dan mampu mengatasi ketirisan, penyelewengan dan penipuan pembayaran cukai.
- Kos pentadbiran lebih tinggi.
- Harga lebih telus tapi boleh naik.
- Lebih 160 buah negara di seluruh dunia telah melaksanakan GST.

SINAR HARIAN

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

Satu daripada tiga orang dewasa di Malaysia alami darah tinggi

HM
16/6

Seremban: Tahap kesedaran yang masih rendah dalam kalangan segelintir rakyat mengenai kepentingan pemeriksaan kesihatan antara punca mereka tidak menjalani pemeriksaan secara berkala termasuk bagi penyakit tidak berjangkit (NCD), kanser serta kesihatan mental.

Menteri Kesihatan Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad berkata, kebanyakan masyarakat hanya mendapatkan rawatan apabila penyakit telah dikenal pasti atau berada pada tahap lebih serius berbanding menjalani pemeriksaan awal.

Beliau berkata, mustahak untuk masyarakat cakna terhadap kesihatan diri dan keluarga dengan melakukan serta memperingkatkan saringan kesihatan termasuk disusuli intervensi dan rawatan.



DR Dzulkefly menyantuni orang ramai melakukan saringan kesihatan pada Karnival Minda Sihat, Komuniti Sejahtera DUN Paroi di Masjid Kariah Taman Bandar Senawang.

"Ini sebabnya Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) dalam Inisiatif Saringan Kesihatan Kebangsaan (NH-SI) menekankan lakukan saringan, bukan sahaja NCD, tetapi untuk penyakit kanser dan juga sari-

ngan kesihatan mental. "Ia terkait dengan persoalan literasi kesihatan, mereka tak tahu, tiba-tiba diserang strok, serangan jantung, mereka tak tahu ada kencing manis, darah tinggi, kolesterol tinggi se-

bab mereka tak pernah menjalani saringan, banyak yang kita lihat sekarang, ada yang berusia lingkungan 30 dan 40 tahun," katanya.

Beliau berkata demikian selepas merasmikan Karnival Minda Sihat, Komuniti Sejahtera Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Paroi yang turut dihadiri Pengarah Kesihatan Negeri Dr Zuraida Mohamed, semalam.

Dzulkefly berkata, Kajian Kesihatan dan Morbiditi Kebangsaan (NHMS) terkini menunjukkan satu daripada tiga golongan dewasa di negara ini menghidap tekanan darah tinggi, satu daripada tiga mempunyai kolesterol tinggi, manakala satu daripada enam menghidap kencing manis, dengan 50 peratus berdepan masalah obesiti.

HARIAN METRO
Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

Kuala Lumpur: Sebanyak 476 kes bunuh direkodkan Polis Diraja Malaysia (PDRM) di seluruh negara bagi tempoh Januari 2023 hingga akhir 2024.

Jabatan Siasatan Jenayah (JSJ) Bukit Aman memaklumkan 261 kes bunuh dilaporkan pada 2023 dengan purata lima kes bagi tempoh seminggu atau bersamaan 21 kes sebulan.

Katanya, bagi tempoh Ja-

HM 16/6

Selangor catat jumlah kes bunuh tertinggi

nuari hingga November tahun lalu pula, JSJ merekodkan sebanyak 215 kes bunuh dengan purata empat kes seminggu atau 17 kes sebulan.

"Selangor mencatatkan jumlah tertinggi kes jenayah bunuh membabitkan 115 kes bagi tempoh 2023 hingga November tahun

lalu diikuti Perak (60 kes); Johor (59 kes); Sabah (47 kes) dan Sarawak (36 kes).

"Kes bunuh yang tinggi di Selangor dipengaruhi oleh faktor keluasan kawasan dan kepadatan penduduk di samping faktor kepesatan ekonomi menyumbang kepada kemiskinan pekerja warga ne-

gara asing di negeri itu," katanya.

Menurutnya, seramai 266 mangsa kes bunuh direkodkan pada 2023 membabitkan 212 lelaki dan 54 wanita.

"Bagi tempoh Januari hingga November 2024 pula, seramai 226 mangsa kes bunuh dicatatkan dengan

warga asing merekodkan jumlah seramai 87 orang.

"Hasil dapatan analisis juga mendapati warga asing adalah mangsa kes bunuh tertinggi jika dibandingkan dengan individu tempatan," katanya.

Katanya, sebanyak 185 kertas siasatan iaitu 71 peratus daripada jumlah ke-

seluruhan kes bunuh direkodkan pada 2023 berjaya dituntut di mahkamah mengikut Seksyen 302 Kanun Keseksaan.

"Bagi tempoh Januari hingga November 2024, sebanyak 149 kertas siasatan iaitu 69.30 peratus daripada jumlah keseluruhan kes bunuh berjaya dituntut di mahkamah mengikut seksyen sama," katanya.

HARIAN METRO

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025



Dr Dzulkefly melihat pemeriksaan kesihatan yang diadakan pada Karnival Minda Sihat, Komuniti Sejahtera DUN Paroi di Masjid Kariah Taman Bandar Senawang, Seremban, semalam.

(Foto Mohd Amin Jalil/BH)

Kesedaran rendah punca rakyat abaikan saringan awal penyakit

Seremban: Sebahagian golongan muda yang berusia 30 hingga 40 tahun di negara ini tidak sedar mereka mengalami penyakit tidak berjangkit (NCD) seperti darah tinggi dan kencing manis kerana gagal membuat pemeriksaan berkala.

Tahap literasi kesihatan agak rendah antara punca segelintir rakyat negara ini tidak melakukan saringan kesihatan secara berkala.

Menteri Kesihatan, Datuk Seri Dr Dzulkefly Ahmad, berkata berdasarkan Kajian Kesihatan dan Mobiliti Kebangsaan (NHMS) terkini, satu daripada tiga rakyat dewasa negara ini menghidap tekanan darah tinggi dan mempunyai tahap kolesterol tinggi.

"Selain itu, satu daripada enam orang mempunyai penyakit kencing manis dan 50 per-

atus daripada kita mengalami masalah berat badan berlebihan atau obesiti," katanya selepas merasmikan Karnival Minda Sihat, Komuniti Sejahtera Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Paroi, di Masjid Kariah Taman Bandar Senawang, di sini, semalam.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, kebanyakan mereka mendapatkan rawatan kesihatan hanya ketika penyakit dikenal pasti.

"Ini sebabnya kami di Kementerian Kesihatan (KKM) tekankan mengenai Inisiatif Saringan Kesihatan Kebangsaan (NHSI) mengenai kepentingan rakyat membuat saringan kesihatan bagi mengesan penyakit tidak berjangkit (PTB) lebih awal.

"Sangat mustahak membuatkan saringan kerana ia dapat membantu mengenal pasti isu kesihatan tersembunyi yang boleh memudaratkan," katanya.

"Sebab itu, kami (KKM) ambil perhatian serius berkaitan saringan kesihatan, apabila mewujudkan pelbagai inisiatif seperti Program Outreach Skim Peduli Kesihatan untuk Kumpulan B40 (PeKa B40) dan Komuniti Sihat Perkasa Negara (KOSPEN)," katanya.

Dr Dzulkefly berkata, KKM turut memberikan penekanan kepada pelaksanaan Dasar Literasi Kesihatan Kebangsaan (DLKK) dalam usaha untuk memperkasakan rakyat dengan pengetahuan dan kemahiran asas dalam penjagaan kesihatan.

Ditanya keperluan mewajibkan dos tambahan COVID-19 berikutan peningkatan kes itu di negara jiran, beliau berkata, tiada keperluan mewajibkannya ketika ini dan orang ramai dinasihatkan supaya sentiasa mengamalkan langkah pencegahan.

BERITA HARIAN
Tarikh 16 JUN 2025

Transformasi tenaga kerja: Strategi Malaysia hadapi revolusi AI

B4
16/6

Peruntukan RM10b setahun untuk latihan kemahiran, termasuk dana sektor swasta

Lebih satu abad lalu, ketika dunia mula menyaksikan gelombang akhir Revolusi Perindustrian Kedua, penulis tersohor Inggeris, Rudyard Kipling, menulis puisi yang menggambarkan kehebatan teknologi pelik pada zamannya.

Teknologi luar biasa yang mampu melakukan begitu banyak tugas manusia;

Kita boleh menarik, mengangkut, menolak, mengangkat dan memandu,

Kita boleh mencetak, membajak, menenun, memanaskan dan menerangi,

Kita boleh berlari, berumba, berenang, terbang dan menyelam,

Kita boleh melihat dan mendengar, mengira, membaca dan menulis.

Namun, dalam puisi yang sama bertajuk *The Secret of the Machines*, Kipling mengingatkan sesuatu yang penting, mesin tetap mesin.

Ja tidak mengenal kasih sayang, tidak mampu berempati, apatah lagi memaafkan.

Hari ini, lebih 100 tahun kemudian, kita berdiri di ambang satu lagi revolusi iaitu era kecerdasan buatan (AI).

Seperti mesin yang dicipta pada zaman Kipling, AI menjanjikan kecekapan luar biasa. Namun ia juga membangkitkan persoalan yang dalam mengenai erti menjadi manusia, maruah, dan masa depan pekerjaan kita.

Ketika mula menjawat jawatan Menteri Sumber Manusia, saya tidak dibelenggu teori akademik atau laporan dasar yang berhabuk.

Sebaliknya, yang menghantui saya ialah suara rakyat pekerja gig, penaja jalanan, pegawai pejabat, pemilik syarikat yang bertanya dengan cemas; "Bolehkah saya mendapatkan pekerjaan sewajarnya?"

"Bolehkah saya memperoleh pendapatan bermaruah?"

"Adakah saya masih relevan dalam dunia yang semakin dikawal mesin?"

Soalan seumpama ini bukan lagi sekadar kebingangan peri-

badi. Ia sudah menjadi perbualan nasional dan memerlukan jawapan.

Kami memutuskan untuk tidak berteka-teki.

Sebaliknya, kami memilih untuk berpandukan data. Dengan kerjasama TalentCorp, kami menjalankan kajian nasional bagi meneliti kesan AI, pendigitalan, dan peralihan kepada ekonomi hijau terhadap pasaran kerja.

Hasilnya mengejutkan apabila 620,000 pekerjaan dikenal pasti berisiko tinggi untuk digantikan oleh automasi. Namun, 60 jenis pekerjaan baharu sedang muncul yang mana 70 peratus daripadanya berkait langsung dengan teknologi digital dan AI.

Ini bukan sekadar teori. Iklan kerja bagi jawatan baharu ini sudah pun wujud. Negara maju sedang melatih tenaga kerja untuk mengisinya. Kita juga harus bertindak.

Malaysia kini memperuntukkan sekitar RM10 billion setahun untuk latihan kemahiran termasuk dana sektor swasta melalui levi mandatori.

Bagi mempercepatkan lagi pembangunan ini, kami melancarkan MyMahir iaitu platform digital nasional yang menawarkan data masa nyata mengenai peluang pekerjaan, kemahiran diperlukan dan kursus latihan yang tersedia.

Kami juga menubuhkan Majlis *Mymahir Future Skills Talent Council* untuk memastikan latihan yang diberikan selaras dengan keperluan sebenar di tempat kerja.

Hasilnya, dalam tempoh setahun, pekerja yang menjalani latihan mencatatkan gaji 12 peratus lebih tinggi daripada purata nasional.

Matlamat jangka panjang kami adalah untuk mewujudkan sebuah 'universiti kemahiran' iaitu nasional yang boleh diakses semua setaraf dengan universiti akademik, tetapi berasaskan realiti industri.

Satu usaha antarabangsa

Cabaran yang dihadapi Malaysia turut dialami oleh negara ASEAN lain.

Ekonomi kita berkembang dan majoriti penduduknya muda, namun sistem pendidikan dan tenaga kerja masih perlu diperkasa agar selari dengan keperluan teknologi semasa.

Pertubuhan Buruh Antarabangsa (ILO) menganggarkan bahawa ASEAN berpotensi mewujudkan sehingga 30 juta pekerjaan hijau menjelang tahun 2030, sekiranya pembaharuan yang tepat dilaksanakan.

Masa depan ini tidak boleh dicapai oleh sesebuah negara se-



Steven Sim (tengah) bersama Menteri Digital, Gobind Singh Deo (ketiga dari kiri); Timbalan Menteri Pengajian Tinggi, Datuk Mustapha Sakmud (ketiga dari kanan); Ketua Pegawai Eksekutif Kumpulan TalentCorp, Thomas Mathew (pertama dari kanan) dan yang lain pada pelancaran MyMahir dan Kajian Impak tahun lalu.

cara bersendirian.

Ketika Malaysia memegang jawatan Pengerusi ASEAN, kami akan menganjurkan dan menjadi tuan rumah kepada Tahun Kemahiran ASEAN 2025, dengan sokongan daripada ILO.

Inisiatif ini bukan sahaja akan merangsang perbincangan mendalam di peringkat serantau mengenai pembangunan modal insan, tetapi juga menyalurkan sumber yang praktikal ke arah matlamat tersebut.

Sebagai permulaan, pada bulan Jun 2025, Malaysia bercadang membuka Minggu Latihan Kebangsaan tahunan kami kepada seluruh warga ASEAN, dengan menawarkan sebanyak 65,000 kursus latihan kemahiran berkualiti tinggi daripada jenama tempatan dan antarabangsa.

Ini adalah pelaburan kami dalam pembangunan modal insan serantau, dengan aspirasi menjadikan ASEAN sebagai rantau paling berkemahiran tinggi di dunia.

Kami juga berbangsa menjalinkan kerjasama dengan Forum Ekonomi Dunia (WEF) untuk bersama-sama menerajui Pemecut Kesamarataan Gender dalam Masa Depan Pekerjaan di Malaysia, satu inisiatif yang bertujuan memperkasakan bakat wanita pada era AI ini.

Usaha ini sejajar dengan matlamat Kerangka Ekonomi Madani negara yang mahu meningkatkan kadar penyertaan wanita dalam tenaga kerja.

Inisiatif ini akan mencadangkan dasar berdasarkan bukti untuk memperkasakan kedudukan eko-



Steven Sim menyampaikan pidato terbuka pada sesi ke-113 Persidangan Buruh Antarabangsa di Geneva, Switzerland.

nomi wanita dalam pasaran buruh.

Isunya adalah maruah manusia. Ketika kita cuba memahami masa kini dan meramalkan masa depan, satu perkara pasti; manusia ialah yang menulis panduan untuk teknologi.

Kipling menamatkan puisinya dengan nada yang menenangkan, kita yang mengawal teknologi, bukan sebaliknya.

Walau asap kami menyelubungi langit dari pandanganmu ia akan lenyap dan bintang akan bersinar semula

Kerana, walau kami berkuasa dan besar

Kami hanyalah anak-anak dari mindamu!

Akhirnya, persoalan sebenar bukanlah mengenai bagaimana

teknologi yang berubah-ubah akan menjejaskan kehidupan manusia, tetapi bagaimana dasar kerajaan boleh secara konsisten memperkasakan dan mengangkat martabat mereka.

Apabila saya mengenang kembali hari-hari awal di pejabat, saya sedar persoalan yang merunsingkan saya bukan semata-mata mengenai pekerjaan atau gaji.

Ia adalah mengenai maruah dan memastikan tiada siapa yang tertinggal di belakang.

Artikel ini ditulis oleh Menteri Sumber Manusia, Steven Sim Chee Keong, dan pertama kali diterbitkan oleh Forum Ekonomi Dunia (World Economic Forum)

Jalan raya selamat bermula dengan sikap pemandu



Pensyarah Kanan, Kumpulan Penyelidikan Turapan dan Pengangkutan, Fakulti Kejuruteraan Awam, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)

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Setiap kali berlaku kemalangan ngeri di jalan raya, terutama membabitkan bas, lori dan kenderaan awam, ramai menuding jari ke arah faktor jalan, kualiti kenderaan atau penguatkuasaan undang-undang.

Namun, pengalaman dan pengamatan dalam bidang keselamatan jalan raya menunjukkan jalan raya selamat bermula dengan sikap pemandu.

Tanpa menafikan peranan faktor teknikal dan sistemik, data serta kajian konsisten menunjukkan lebih 80 peratus punca kemalangan berkait rapat dengan unsur manusia, terutama sikap dan kelalaian pemandu.

Pemandu ialah elemen paling dinamik dalam sistem jalan raya. Berbeza dengan jalan statik atau teknologi dipasang, pemandu boleh membuat ribuan keputusan sepanjang perjalanan. Malangnya, keputusan diambil sering dipengaruhi sikap terburu-buru, emosi atau sikap sambil lewa.

Sikap pemandu berhemah meliputi pelbagai aspek tingkah laku di jalan raya, termasuk kesabaran ketika menghadapi kesesakan atau pemandu lain perlahan, kepekaan peraturan jalan raya, keberanian, bertanggungjawab atas kesalahan, kesediaan mematuhi had laju serta keengganan menggunakan telefon bimbit atau terganggu ketika memandu.

Realitinya, banyak pemandu masih beranggapan jalan raya pentas untuk menunjuk kehebatan, melampirkan ego dan mengejar masa tanpa menghiraukan keselamatan.

Lihat sahaja di mana-mana jalan raya sibuk, pasti ada pemandu memotong barisan tanpa rasa bersalah atau menggunakan lorong kecemasan semata-mata mahu cepat sampai.

Kajian Institut Penyelidikan Keselamatan Jalan Raya Malaysia (MIROS) mendapati tingkah laku

agresif, sikap kurang sabar dan toleransi rendah sesama pemandu menjadi penyumbang besar kepada kemalangan maut.

Kesedaran mematuhi undang-undang

Malah, pendidikan pemandu sahaja tidak mencukupi. Kemahuan dan kesedaran mematuhi undang-undang perlu disokong sistem yang dapat membantu, mendidik dan jika perlu, memaksa perubahan tingkah laku.

Dalam usaha membentuk pemandu lebih bertanggungjawab, strategi menggabungkan pendidikan berkesanan dengan pemantauan konsisten serta penguatkuasaan tegas perlu dirangka.

Sistem diwujudkan mesti menghasilkan persekitaran yang tingkah laku positif pemandu sentiasa diperkukuhkan, manakala sikap negatif dikenakan tindakan sewajarnya.

Ini boleh dilakukan melalui sistem merit dan demerit lebih ketat serta berkesanan, disokong pemantauan teknologi pintar di jalan raya.

Pada masa sama, syarikat pengangkutan awam dan pengusaha logistik wajar diwajibkan melaksana-

kan program latihan pemandu dalam secara berjadual berfokus kepada pengukuhan amalan keselamatan dan etika pemanduan.

Pematuhan kepada standard latihan ini mesti dipantau dan diberi keutamaan dalam proses audit operasi mereka.

Penguatkuasaan undang-undang perlu beralih daripada sekadar reaktif kepada lebih bersifat proaktif. Penggunaan teknologi pengawasan canggih, penstrukturan semula jadual kerja pemandu kenderaan berat bagi mengelakkan keletihan melampau serta pengawalan ketat terhadap rekod disiplin pemandu boleh menjadi antara mekanisme menyokong budaya pemanduan berhemah.

Malah, semua usaha ini mesti disokong sistem integrasi data keselamatan jalan raya menyeluruh, membabitkan kerjasama erat antara pihak berkuasa berkaitan, penggiat industri serta komuniti pengguna jalan raya.

Hanya melalui perkongsian data dan pemantauan bersepadu, risiko tingkah laku berbahaya dapat dikesan lebih awal dan ditangani secara efektif.

Pertubuhan Kesihatan Sedunia (WHO) melaporkan pendekatan sistemik dan pemantauan berterusan antara komponen utama dalam negara berjaya mengurangkan kadar kematian jalan raya secara konsisten.

Namun, penguatkuasaan sahaja tidak dapat membentuk pemandu berhemah. Walaupun sebanyak mana kamera dipasang atau saman dikeluarkan, sekiranya sikap pemandu tidak berubah, risiko kemalangan tetap tinggi.

Oleh itu, usaha kolektif kerajaan, swasta, institusi pendidikan dan komuniti pengguna jalan raya amat diperlukan bagi membentuk budaya pemanduan beretika serta bertanggungjawab.

Pada akhirnya, secanggih mana sistem dan seketat mana pemantauan, jalan raya selamat tetap bergantung kepada sikap individu di belakang stereng. Tiada teknologi atau penguatkuasaan dapat menggantikan sikap pemandu berhemah.

“ Sistem diwujudkan mesti menghasilkan persekitaran yang tingkah laku positif pemandu sentiasa diperkukuhkan, manakala sikap negatif dikenakan tindakan sewajarnya ”

BERITA HARIAN
16 JUN 2025
Tarikh.....

PM: GST only when economy, wages are better

LUMUT: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim has reiterated that the government will not reintroduce the Goods and Services Tax (GST) for now, stressing that it would burden the poor and the low-income group.

He said GST was a broad-based tax that affected all levels of society.

"It taxes everything, even if the rate is low. Sugar, flour, food. Everyone has to pay. That's GST. If you ask me, yes, it's a simple system, just tax everything.

"But I ask you, should fishermen, smallholders, low-income workers and street cleaners also be taxed? That's why we're not ready for GST yet.

"If the economy improves and minimum wage rises to RM4,000 and above, then fine. Implement GST. But right now? No. The op-

position needs a crash course," he said at the closing of the Madani Rakyat programme here.

He said although some economists and opposition politicians argued that GST was a more efficient system, it should only be introduced when the economy was stronger and wages were higher.

"They think SST (Sales and Service Tax) is not as good, GST is better. Do you even understand GST? It touches everybody. If it's six per cent on everything, then everyone has to pay.

"Why should the poor pay? Why should the unemployed have to pay when they eat? Don't turn this into a political issue just because there's nothing else to attack."

He said this included the recent move to tax imported bananas, which drew public criticism.

"Imported bananas are not the

same as our *pisang emas*, *pisang awak* or *pisang berangan*. Those are not taxed."

Anwar said tax revenue was crucial to funding public services and infrastructure development.

"How do we build new hospitals in Manjung? How do we upgrade schools, roads and buy aircraft or ships for national defence?

"It all comes from taxes."

He criticised certain quarters for opposing targeted subsidies and utility tariff reforms under the pretext of defending the rakyat.

"Eighty-five per cent of electricity users are not affected by tariff increases. It's the wealthy who consume more who will pay more."

He said the taxation and subsidy system needed fine-tuning, but urged for constructive engagement instead of politicisation.

NEW STRAITS TIMES
Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025.....

Of private data and public use

16/6
NST

Transparency will allay fears

WHENEVER the government says it is collecting personal data, Malaysians get the jitters. Can't blame them. One thought that crosses the mind of some people is: is Big Brother keeping watch on us? The other and more common concern is about leakages, of which there have been far too many without any serious consequences to those who were responsible. Understandably, the recent announcement by Communications Minister Datuk Fahmi Fadzil that Putrajaya is collecting phone call data from telecommunication companies for policymaking brought back the old anxiety, especially when they learnt that discussions between the government and the telcos have been going on since 2023. Phone call data is itself a fear-generating phrase. Does it mean data on all calls one makes are collected? Early communication would have helped allay the people's fears, but transparency isn't Malaysia's strong point. Putrajaya has to work hard on it.

The government must understand people's fears. Every day, people are bombarded with numerous anonymous calls and text messages. Neither the telcos nor our regulators seem to be able to put a stop to such an invasion into our private world. Some even know the names of the phone owners. How did they get access to the names and phone numbers? Can't blame the

The government must understand people's fears.

people for suspecting it to be an inside job. People do recognise the government's need to work with personal data to deliver their services efficiently and effectively in this highly digitalised world. But their concern is how the personal information is collected, stored and

shared. Not just telcos collect personal data, but all manner of companies do that. The important thing is robust oversight by regulators. Making the non-compliant accountable is critical. Since 2017, only about 20 companies have been compounded or fined for personal data breaches under the Personal Data Protection Act 2010 (PDPA), some even for processing personal information without consent or permits. Thankfully, the amended PDPA that came into effect in January comes with a bigger bite. Data controllers and data processors face a fine of up to RM1 million or imprisonment of up to three years or both for non-compliance. As under the unamended act, gathering evidence remains a huge challenge as the lawbreakers delete the data once non-compliance is detected. Some have described the hunt for evidence as a cat-and-mouse game, only more vicious.

So where does this leave the people whose personal data has been made public by unlawful means? The tort of invasion of privacy, which is a well-developed civil remedy in several common law countries, isn't recognised in Malaysian jurisprudence. A court or two appeared to have thought it was a recognised tort, but higher courts have overruled such judicial activism. Perhaps the answer lies in the statutory introduction of the tort. Some will argue that there is no need for one because the PDPA is there, but they forget that it doesn't address civil remedies. Until such time when invasion of privacy does become a recognised tort in Malaysia, either through the courts or statutory introduction, people must seek recourse through other torts such as breach of confidence or negligence. Not an easy route, is our assessment.

NEW STRAITS TIMES
Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025.....

Public urged to have domestic pets microchipped

➤ Move seen as sign of responsible ownership, in addition to supporting efforts to manage animal welfare in communities

BY KIRTINEE RAMESH
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: The Veterinary Services Department (VSD) is calling on pet owners to microchip their animals, describing it as a vital step in addressing the stray population and protecting domestic pets.

As of May, over 25,800 pets have been microchipped nationwide.

Under Malaysian law, all pets - specifically dogs and cats - must be identified and registered.

VSD confirmed that microchipping remains the standard method, with every registered pet issued an Animal Identification Card under the Animal Passport System.

"Microchipping is more than a safety measure; it's a sign of responsible ownership," said VSD veterinary officer Dr Salina Amad Bugis.

"It helps reunite lost pets with their families and supports broader efforts to manage animal welfare in our communities."

While any registered veterinarian can carry out the procedure, only VSD officers and authorised vets are permitted to issue the official ID card.

The procedure is quick, minimally invasive and carries rare health risks.

To increase accessibility, VSD regularly offers subsidised microchipping programmes during national events such as World Rabies Day, World Veterinary Day and the Malaysia Agriculture, Horticulture and Agrotourism Show as well as state-level initiatives.

In May, Malacca VSD conducted an outreach campaign in Sungai Udang, offering rabies awareness and microchipping services household pets.

VSD is also working with certified clinics to provide microchipping during regular vet visits,



The department is also working with certified clinics to provide microchipping during regular vet visits, aiming to simplify registration for pet owners. - ADIB RAWI YAHYA/THE SUN

aiming to simplify registration for pet owners.

"Although microchipping alone won't eliminate the stray issue, it is a key part of a broader strategy involving vaccination, education and animal control," Salina said.

Globally and locally, microchipping has proven effective in reducing lost pet cases and improving reunification rates.

"As responsible pet owners, it is our duty to ensure the safety, health and well-being of our animals," she added. "Get your pet microchipped and registered at your nearest VSD office or authorised veterinary clinic. Together, we can build a more compassionate and accountable pet-owning community."

Meanwhile, an animal welfare advocate warned that gaps in enforcement and registration are limiting the effectiveness of the system.

Malaysian Animal Welfare Association president Mukunnann Sugumaran described microchipping as essential yet underutilised due to a lack of central oversight.

"Microchipping is a simple, safe procedure that costs about RM100 and should be seen as part of responsible pet ownership. But I've

personally rescued dogs with microchips only to find their data missing from any registry," he said.

Mukunnann noted that not all shelters or adoption centres microchip the animals they release, which can lead to abandonment cases in which owners deny responsibility.

"Too often, when pets are dumped, there's no way to trace the owner. The law can't act if there's no evidence," he said, pointing to Section 29(1)(d) of the Animal Welfare Act, which makes abandonment a punishable offence.

To date, no one has been charged under the clause due to the lack of traceable records.

Mukunnann called for a unified national registration system, better enforcement and clearer legal frameworks.

"Microchipping should be mandatory, not optional. Every shelter, rescue group and pet owner has a role to play in proper registration," he said.

He urged government agencies, local councils and NGOs to collaborate in building a more structured and enforceable microchipping system.

THE SUN
16 JUN 2025
Tarikh:

Leadership styles and team performance

Voices of Reason
By Prof Dr Akram Al-Khaled

THE adoption of hybrid workplaces has changed the practice and performance of leadership as well as teamwork. This is particularly true when it comes to considering the effects of various leadership styles on performance. Within this emerging framework, leadership is not limited to a fixed area as it now involves remote work, self-governance and digital mediation.

Leadership styles of empowering, democratic, autocratic and *laissez-faire* are said to not only affect motivation at personal and individual levels but also affect the team level in a hybrid setting where members work partly physically and partly virtually.

Therefore, to sustain and achieve desired levels of productivity, innovation and engagement in business, it is imperative to appreciate the impacts of different leadership styles exercised in hybrid work environments.

Empowering leadership is one of the most hybrid-friendly styles of leadership and it features delegation, autonomy and shared responsibility.

Empowering leadership has a strong direct impact on adaptive performance. This is particularly when it is mediated through knowledge sharing and employee agility.

In hybrid work settings, the contextual distance between leaders and employees tends to slow down real-time feedback and tangible supervision. This forces employees to self-manage, make independent decisions and adjust to rolling challenges on their own.

Empowering leaders tend to cherish these constraints by aiming to provide motivation and trust that is more intrinsic. This leadership style meets the psychological needs of competence and interpersonal connection.

According to the self-determination theory, these are essential for performance and active engagement. Self-directed agile teams led by empowering leaders are not only more adaptable but they are also more innovative as members are encouraged to actively participate and take responsibility.

Leadership that empowers tends to improve collaboration within a team through the process of sharing informative knowledge.

In hybrid teams, where face-to-face knowledge transfer is mostly limited to informal interactions, fostering cultures of deliberate proactive knowledge transfer becomes important.



In traditional office environments, leaders have the benefits of witnessing behaviours and managing them in real time. -BERNAMAPIC

Empowering leadership actively solicits the donation and collection of knowledge through reciprocal social exchanges among employees. This phenomenon, grounded in social exchange theory, fosters team integration and overall achievement.

Under these conditions, team members are more willing to help one another, cover absent skills and respond to difficult problems in a coordinated manner when they are granted autonomy and trust.

Contrary to that, certain researchers have focused on the effects of autocratic, democratic and *laissez-faire* leadership styles on motivation in hybrid contexts.

Their study indicated that democratic leadership had a strong positive impact on employee motivation and engagement, which reinforces team performance.

Democratic leadership fosters active team communication as shared goals and personal values are integrated while psychological safety is maintained. This is particularly important for hybrid teams because they suffer from miscommunication and social isolation.

The likelihood of participation, contribution of creative ideas and responsibility towards achieving shared goals increases when team members are actively engaged throughout the entire process. On the contrary, autocratic leadership is least useful in hybrid contexts

because such settings tend to promote control at the centre, which curbs initiative and flexibility.

It has been reported that autocratic styles tend to have lower motivation because of lack of participation and higher levels of distrust. This is especially true for leaders who try to distance themselves and then manage everything closely.

Although productivity may rise in the short term from an autocratic style applied to repetitive and routine tasks, it hampers the formation of team synergy, multilateral adaptability and innovative problem-solving capabilities. These attributes are essential to thrive in the intricacy brought about by the hybrid work environment.

This leadership stems from the assumption that leaders should not intervene or make decisions at all. In hybrid settings, this approach is linked with poor to unfavourable motivational outcomes.

Direction and support missing may result in fragmented teams, ambiguity of roles and poor performance. Under this form of leadership, teams appear to have a low level of coordination as well as definable clarity, which in turn diminishes productivity and collaboration.

Such a hands-off attitude only makes an already challenging situation much worse due to time differences, distance and lack of synchronous communication.

In traditional office environments, leaders have the benefits of witnessing behaviours and managing them in real time. Frequent social check-ins, observatory metrics and structured interactions become increasingly crucial in hybrid arrangements.

The hybrid paradigm is also contingent upon the leader's capability to stimulate employee agility, that is, the capacity to foretell, adjust and actively address change.

Some researchers have found that agility alongside strategic leadership styles and adaptive performance are interdependent. Exercising team agility can be said to resolve prioritisation, tool selection and workflow ambiguity issues within hybrid systems.

The hybrid model brings new elements of leadership to the forefront, which is extremely interesting. The effectiveness from flexibility of hybrid teams combined with the holistic leadership multi-strategy integration responds well to the changing moments and phases of the team.

Unlike many other domains within organisational balance, flexibility stands out in a hybrid configuration. Team alignment, task interdependence and level of infrastructure available are important. This is because function does not always follow form.

For example, it can be said that democratic leadership may be more effective within creative consensus teams. On the other hand, empowering leadership would take precedence where personal responsibility is deemed to be critical.

In this hybrid framework, the combination of different leadership styles is what strongly drives team performance. When a leader shows empowering leadership, it can be said that a higher level of self-initiative is endorsed.

On the other hand, democratic leadership is where trust is given within collective efforts. Practically speaking, it improves visibility, oversight, communication and social disconnection that characterise the hybrid workplace.

The participation gap can be explained well as coming from leadership that does not have cohesion. This results from overriding autocratic or *laissez-faire* styles. Having structure and flexibility, control and trust as well as direction and freedom can improve team work within a hybrid setting.

The author is from the Faculty of Management and Hospitality at Spectrum International University College. Comments: letters@thesunday.com

THE SUN
16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:

HDA homes exempt from SST, says minister

12/6
SST

► Exemption applies to all residential units, including serviced apartments intended for housing use

BY HASHINI KAVISHTRI KANNAN
newsdesk@thesundaily.com

PETALING JAYA: Residential properties sold under the Housing Development Act (HDA) are not subject to the Sales and Services Tax (SST), said Housing and Local Government Minister Nga Kor Ming yesterday.

He said the exemption is determined by either the land title or the intended use of the property.

"In essence, all residential units, including serviced apartments on commercial land titles, are exempt from SST, provided they are intended for residential purposes and fall under HDA regulations," he said in a statement.

Nga made the clarification following discussions with Finance Minister II Datuk Seri Amir Hamzah Azizan, in response to concerns raised by industry stakeholders over the revised SST framework.

The Housing Development (Control and

Licensing) Act 1966 is designed to regulate housing development and protect homebuyers purchasing residential properties from developers.

The Act has been amended several times, notably in 2002, 2007, 2012 and 2015, to enhance consumer protection and align with changes in the housing sector.

Addressing concerns over cascading tax effects, Nga explained that a business-to-business exemption is in place, ensuring that the service tax is imposed only once within the supply chain.

According to the Finance Ministry, essential construction materials such as cement, aggregates and sand remain zero-rated.

Out of 400 tariff codes linked to building materials, only eight – including items such as vats, laminated glass and netting – will see an increase in sales tax, impacting just 2% of total codes.

Contractors may also opt to separate material costs from service charges,

ensuring that the service tax is applied solely to construction services.

Nga said his ministry will continue engaging with the Finance Ministry and key stakeholders to ensure tax policies are implemented fairly, protect homebuyers' interests and support a sustainable housing sector.

"In line with the Madani aspirations, the ministry is committed to preserving housing affordability and protecting homebuyers under the revised SST framework," he said.

The Finance Ministry recently announced that the revised SST, introduced under Budget 2025, will take effect on July 1.

The new framework includes a 5% to 10% sales tax on selected non-essential goods.

The scope of the service tax will also be expanded to cover additional services, including rental and leasing, construction, finance, private healthcare, education and beauty services.

A 6% service tax will apply to providers earning over RM1.5 million annually.

Amir Hamzah said the updated SST reflects a more sophisticated tax structure aimed at promoting shared prosperity and preventing a widening income gap.

THE SUN
16 JUN 2025

Tarikh:

'Govt not ready to bring back GST'

11/6
SUN

LUMUT: The government is not ready to reintroduce the Goods and Services Tax (GST) as doing so would burden all segments of society, particularly low-income groups, said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim yesterday.

He described GST as a broad-based tax that, while efficient, would be applied uniformly to all consumers regardless of income, including fishermen, smallholders and street cleaners.

"GST taxes everybody. While it is efficient and straightforward, just 6% across the board, I must ask, if everyone has to pay 6%, should the poor and the unemployed be taxed as well?" he told Bernama.

He acknowledged that the opposition has proposed GST as a viable revenue option, but said the government has decided to postpone its implementation to avoid further straining households already grappling with the rising cost of living.

"That is why we say we are not ready for GST. If one day, the economy improves and the minimum wage reaches RM4,000 or more, then by all means, implement GST. But for now, I'm calling for it to be postponed, don't turn it into a political issue."

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16 JUN 2025

Tarikh: