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EDITION
013.2020



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HOLDINGS BERHAD** (414615-U)
Developer
BSS DEVELOPMENT SDN BHD
(689638-X)

Head Office
Wisma Matrix, No.57, Jalan Tun Dr. Ismail,
70200 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan D.K, Malaysia
T +606 794 2888 F +606 794 2878
Matrix Galleria @ d'Tempat
PT 12653, Jalan Pusat Dagangan Sendayan 1,
71950 Bandar Sri Sendayan, Negeri Sembilan D.K, Malaysia
T +606 792 2868 F +606 792 2878
GPS Coordinate Code 2.674820, 101.863722

1800 88 2688
www.arasendayan.com.my



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WITH US!



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MATRIX CARE CENTRE
+606 792 2877
matrixcarecentre@mchb.com.my

Editor In Chief
Kim Teoh

Editorial Team
Yap Woon How
Anisah Zaid
Vivian Chong
Ahmad Faizal
Shameera

Photographer
Chong Kok Kiong

Contributors
Matrix Global Schools
d'SORA Boutique Business Hotel
d'Tempat Country Club
Mawar Medical Centre

DICETAK OLEH

ST ENTERPRISE (000733961-T)
No. 14, Jalan PBS 14/13
Taman Perindustrian Bukit Serdang
43300 Seri Kembangan, Selangor.
PQ1780/2663/A

WEBSITES

Corporate
www.mchb.com.my
Bandar Sri Sendayan
www.sendayan.com.my
Sendayan Techvalley
www.techvalley.com.my
Bandar Seri Impian
www.seriimpian.com.my

ART DIRECTION

Artique Design (00241713-A)
Nicco L

FEEDBACK & ENQUIRY

Have something to say?
Drop us an email at
anisah@mchb.com.my
or call us at
+606 7642 688



HEAD OFFICE

**MATRIX CONCEPTS
HOLDINGS BERHAD**
(414615-U)

Wisma Matrix, No. 57,
Jalan Tun Dr. Ismail, 70200 Seremban,
Negeri Sembilan D.K, Malaysia.
T +606 764 2688 | F +606 764 6288



BRANCH OFFICE (Central Region)

**MATRIX CONCEPTS
(CENTRAL) SDN BHD**
(404543-A)

No. A-1-5, Setiawalk, Persiaran Wawasan,
Pusat Bandar Puchong, 47610 Puchong,
Selangor D.E, Malaysia.
T +603 8601 7572 | F +03 8601 7571

SALES OFFICE (Southern Region)

**MATRIX CONCEPTS
SDN BHD**
(295708-V)

No. 1, Impiana Square,
Jalan Seri Impian 8/1A, Bandar Seri Impian,
86000 Kluang, Johor D.T, Malaysia.
T +607 774 2688 | F +607 774 4688

SALES OFFICE (Central Region)

**MATRIX GALLERIA
@ d'TEMPAT**

PT 12653, Jalan Pusat Dagangan
Sendayan 1, 71950 Bandar Sri Sendayan,
N.Sembilan D.K, Malaysia
T +606 792 2868 | F +606 792 2878

SALES OFFICE (Australia)

**MATRIX DEVELOPMENT
(AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD300B**

Neerim Road, Carnegie 3163
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
T +614 3091 1318 (Jon) | E enquiry@
mchb.com.au

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Matrix Medicare celebrated the signing of a management agreement with Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar



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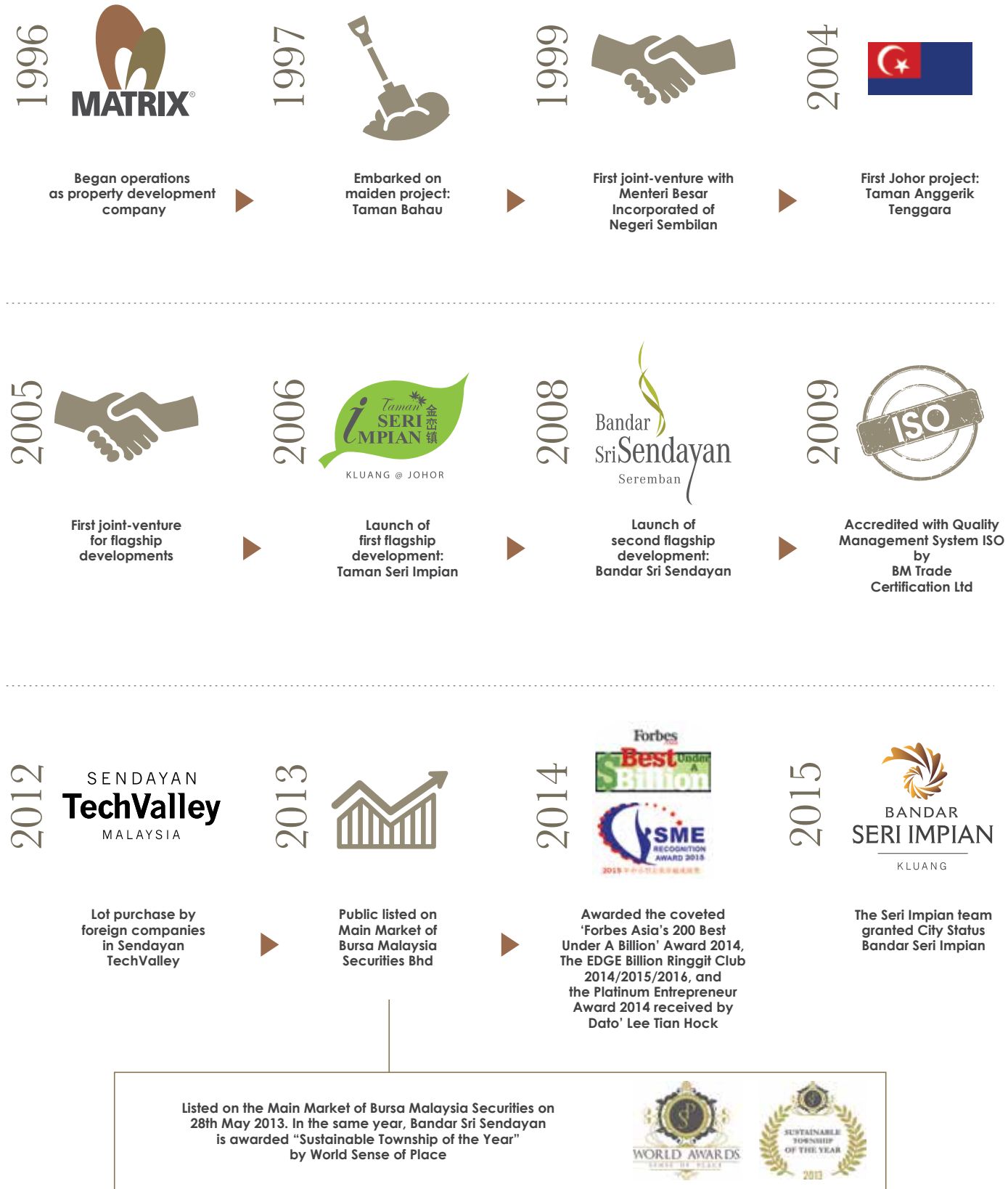
Another sweeping win for both women and men division in the 61st MABA/Matrix Agong Cup National Basketball Champion

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70

Take care of your kidneys, and your kidneys will take care of you

Group Milestones



Positivity & Joy for 2020

As developers and builders, we pride ourselves in being able to innovate with change. Bob Dylan's *For the Times They Are A-Changin'* speaks true in our country now and the differences between the generations have never been so prevalent and varied.

Every business and industry must reassess and review in preparation towards betterment and the impending unknown. Change is imminent.

Seeds must be sown, and saplings must be nurtured. This has been the drive for us and rewards are slowly being reaped. In 2019, we have achieved a few milestones – two awards by The Edge Billion Ringgit Club for the highest return on equity and the highest returns to shareholders over the past three years; another is our venture into healthcare with the management takeover of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (pg 12). Of course, this year also marked our first stake into Indonesia with the development of Menara Syariah Twin Towers (pg 14).

In this issue, we were inspired by the global climate change conversation. Digging deeper, we found that there are small changes that each and every one of us can make. On page 36, we explore the impact that global warming

has on climate change, the major contributing factors and how we as ordinary citizens can help to make a difference by changing small habits and becoming more conscious. This is more in tandem with the lifestyle in our Bandar Seri Impian, Kluang, Johor, where the town is known for its organic farms and preservation efforts (pg 48).

As with the start of the new year, new resolutions in health and fitness will be made, yet again. On page 28, we list out the trends that will stick and the ones that will evolve with the everchanging lifestyles. One workout that reigns above all else and is highly recommended by industry professionals remains HIIT (pg 32). Incorporating a workout early on will balance out all the scrumptious goodies enjoyed during Chinese New Year. If you're bold in the kitchen, try out our Nian Gao recipe (pg 68) prepared in not-so-traditional ways for a hint of novelty.

From all of us here at Matrix Concepts, we wish you a wonderful start to the new year and a year full of positivity and joy.

Here's to 2020!



[Left: Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts, and Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah, chairman of Matrix Concepts]

WE DID IT AGAIN!

Working At Matrix



I've learned a lot in the three years of being a staff at Matrix Global Schools. The field of private education is getting more and more competitive, so we have to continuously raise the bar of our achievements, reflect and reinvent ourselves in order to provide a better education to our students. Having a supportive parent company who does not falter in making bold decisions ensures the company stays inline to remain sustainable.

Raja Nazatul Akhma
Assistant Marketing Manager
Matrix Global Schools



I began my fifth year with d'Tempat Country Club last October and am still very proud to be a part of Matrix Concepts. I am thankful to be given the opportunity to see something evolve to where the club is now today, and we get tremendous support from the group. It's like being a part of one big family, working towards a common goal -- customer satisfaction. That being said, it has driven me to constantly improve myself in order to keep up with the times and remain relevant within the hospitality industry.

Mohamad Rhuad Abdul Rahim
Manager, Sales & Events
d'Tempat Country Club



Being in Corporate Communication, I would say that there is never a dull moment in my job. Every task is a challenge to me. Meeting up with different level of people everyday, needing to be hands on especially during events, is part of the learning experience I gained in Matrix. People at Matrix are amazing, too. I am constantly surrounded by experienced and helpful colleagues. Most of them have been working with Matrix for many years and are successful in their career. I've learned to never stop challenging myself and always push to the limit and never let myself get trapped in a comfort zone.

Ahmad Faizal
Senior Executive
Corporate Communication & PR



I have worked for many great companies in the past and can honestly say that the Sales & Marketing department in Matrix Concepts is the best I have ever worked for. My superior and the team are extremely supportive, kind and genuinely care about me as an individual. Everyday, the team works together to deliver more value and make improvements for the company and the community.

Chia Wai Kit
Executive
Sales & Marketing Department

Career Opportunity

Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad is always seeking new talent and mind to join its ever expanding team. If you are seeking a challenging and rewarding career opportunity with a fast-growing property developer in Malaysia, then Matrix Concepts is the company for you.

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Tel: 06-764 2688 Fax: 06-764 6288

e-mail: career@mchb.com.my



d'Tempat Country Club is a premier business and family country club in Negeri Sembilan. Accredited with Gold Standard (Provisional) by the Green Building Index (GBI) Malaysia.

We are hiring individuals who are dedicated, passionate and customer-oriented persons to be part of our team.

Interested applicants are invited to write in or email detailed resumes to:

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e-mail: may@dtempat.com
www.dsora.com.my



The King Of Fruits Rules

13 June 2019 – As a gesture of appreciation, a total of 10,000kg of Musang King durians were given away at Matrix Concepts' townships for several days.

The Durian Fest took place over few days in Negeri Sembilan and Johor, starting with Matrix Galleria Ara Sendayan in Bandar Sri Sendayan on 13 June 2019; SIGC Paroi Jaya on 20 July 2019; Tiara Sendayan in Bandar Sri Sendayan on 17 August 2019; and 24 August 2019 at Hijayu Aman in Bandar Sri Sendayan and Impiana Bayu in Bandar Seri Impian, Kluang.

A crowd of 10,000 attended the fest at all five venues, which started at 11:00am and ended at 3:00pm.

Besides the durians, in-season local fruits such as coconut, rambutan, mangosteen and dragon fruit were also served. Visitors especially children were enthralled by the magician and clown performances.

"Our Durian Fest is Matrix Concepts' appreciation towards our



buyer-community and supporters. This is one of our ways of thanking them.

"Food unites all Malaysians and it goes without saying, more so the Musang King durians. The response was overwhelming that all our durians were taken up within two hours," said Lim Kok Yee, chief marketing officer of Matrix Concepts.



Matrix Concepts' team joined the march-post of the Merdeka celebration.

Unity At 62nd National Day Parade

31 August 2019 – Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad took part in the state level 62nd National Day parade at Padang MPS, Seremban.

Led by head of security, Matrix Concepts, Zazali Alias, 60 participants comprising staff from HQ, d'Tempat Country Club and Matrix Global Schools joined the parade.

The parade kicked off at 7:00am and was crowded with almost 10,000 visitors with 5,000 strong participants that came in 104 contingents of various organisations from the government, political party, veteran soldiers, private sector, schools, statutory body, higher learning institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGO).

Chief Minister of Negeri Sembilan YAB Dato' Seri Haji Aminuddin bin Harun delivered the opening speech, and gracing the parade were *Duli Yang Maha Mulia (DYMM) Yang di-Pertuan Besar Negeri Sembilan*, Tuanku Muhriz ibni Almarhum Tuanku Munawir and his consort *DYMM Tunku Ampuan Besar Negeri Sembilan*, Tuanku Aishah Rohani Almarhum Tengku Besar Mahmud. Also, in attendance were *Undang Yang Empat & Tunku Besar Tampin* together with



Tunku Besar Seri Menanti, Tunku Ali Redhaudin Tuanku Muhriz.

"The National Day parade is to instill patriotism amongst the younger generations. It is a reminder to all Malaysians to continue to live in harmony and tolerance with respect for all races and diversity.

"Our forefathers have sacrificed much towards the independence of our country and we must continue to remember this as fellow Malaysians," Ho Kong Soon, group managing director of Matrix Concepts said as he attended the parade, too.



A group photo of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar's new team and the management, together with Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad and chairman of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (PHM).

Matrix Concepts Ventures Into Healthcare

17 September 2019 – Matrix Concepts has expanded into the healthcare sector with its appointment as the exclusive manager of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (PHM).

A management agreement was inked between Matrix Medicare Sdn Bhd (MMSB) and Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (PHM) for the operational management of the latter's specialist hospital division, haemodialysis centre and clinics.

Matrix Medicare (MMSB) will exclusively manage the centre for a period of 30 years, providing services relating to non-clinical matters, including financial, administration and management of resources.

The management agreement was signed by Ho Kong Soon, group managing director of Matrix Concepts, Lau Chee Boon and Dato' Tan Gee Swan, council members of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (PHM).

The ceremony was witnessed by Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah bin Mohamad Amin, chairman of Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad; Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman who is also PHM's chairman; and Leong Jee Van, CEO of Property Development Matrix Concepts.

On 30 September 2019, Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar (PHM)

reopened its doors with eight specialists including a resident cardiologist, nephrologist, orthopaedist, anaesthesiologist and ENT (ear, nose, and throat) specialist.

"It was the right thing to do as we assist the old management of PHM which were facing difficulties for the past months. The move to consolidate all dialysis centres under NSCMH was to provide the best available dialysis centres to the patients with better overall management, besides taking care of the welfare of its doctors and providers," said Dato' Lee Tian Hock.

"This partnership allows us the next step towards healthcare and with the talent pool in PHM, we believe that the expansion towards establishing a major medical centre can be materialised," Dato' Lee Tian Hock added.



The agreement was signed by group managing director of Matrix Concepts, Ho Kong Soon, Lau Chee Boon, deputy chairman of Pusat Hemodialisis Mawar, and Dato' Tan Gee Swan, council member of (PHM).



The Edge KL Rat Race

THE EDGE KUALA LUMPUR RATRACE 2019

27 November 2019 – More than 1,000 people from the corporate sector packed the Perdana Botanical Garden, Kuala Lumpur to participate in The Edge KL Rat Race 2019. The event was held in conjunction of its yearly Corporate Malaysia's run which marked its 19th edition.

Matrix Concepts once again made its appearance as a Platinum sponsor, bringing its own teams and supporters who proudly wore blue-black Matrix t-shirts bearing the image of Jalur Gemilang.

Matrix's runners comprising staff from HQ, Matrix Global Schools (MGS) and d'Tempat Country Club competed in the Open 1, Open 2, Mixed and Senior Categories. Matrix sent one team for each category, consisting of five runners each team.

"The run is one of the highlights for us in Matrix Concepts. It brings our associates from the various business units together, inculcating team work and sportsmanship while staying fit and healthy.

"Plus, the objective of the run is to contribute towards education, training and skills development which is very much in line with Matrix Concepts' aspirations and goals," said Leong Jee Van, CEO of Matrix Concepts, before the flag off in CEO



Leong Jee Van, CEO of Matrix Concepts, was the first runner to kick-off the 5KM category.

Category with Dato' (Ir.) Batumalai A/L Ramasamy, director of Matrix Concepts.

Other than that, our very own Dato' Ir Batumalai was awarded with *The Most Senior Runner* – at the age of 72.



Group photo at launching ceremony (from left): Dato' Lee Tian Hock, founder and group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts; Dr Nono Sampono, president director of Agung Sedayu Group; Erick Thohir, Minister of State Owned Enterprise; Susanto Kusuma, founder and chairman of ASG, General TNI Fachrul Razi Batubara, Minister of Religion; General (Rtd) Luhur Binsar Pandjaitan, coordinating minister of Maritime Affairs and Investment; Dr Ir Airlangga Hartarto, coordinating minister for Economic Affairs; Dato Mohamad Haslah bin Mohamad Amin, chairman of MCHB; Prof Dr KH Said Aqil Siradj, chairman of Pengurus Besar Nahdlatul Ulama (PNBU); Komjen Pol (Purn) Drs Syafruddin, police commissioner and VP of Dewan Masjid Indonesia; Sugianto Kusuma, founder and group CEO of ASG, and Harianto Solichin, president director of Nikko Sekuritas Indonesia.

Menara Syariah Twin Towers Kick-starts Indonesian Investment



8 December 2019 – Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad spreads its reach into Indonesia with its newest equity investment to develop an initial 3.6-hectare plot of land in Pantai Indah Kapuk 2 (PIK 2), deemed as the next international waterfront city of North Jakarta.

The said plot of land is located within an area which has been earmarked as an Islamic Financial District which forms part of the International Financial District of 23.5 hectares, expected to be the *financial pulse of the city*, similar to the Financial District in New York.

To be built on 1.4-hectare of the 3.6-hectare plot, Menara Syariah Twin Towers expected to be completed end 2021 with a gross development value (GDV) of USD250million, will spur the growth of the rest of the development in the 12-hectare Islamic Financial District.



Menara Syariah Twin Towers will be a commercial and retail building with two office towers, each 29-storey high. It is designed to promote a unique identity with modern, conducive and future-ready workspace as a world-class business hub.

Upon completion, Menara Syariah Twin Towers will have more than a million square feet of gross floor area providing workspaces for 5,000 office workers with stunning coastal views of Jakarta Bay complete with retail strip, landscaped observation deck, infinity pool, prayer halls and 23 floors of office space.

The project will be developed by PT Fin Centerindo Satu, a joint-venture company between Matrix Concepts, Agung Sedayu and Salim Group with Nikko Sekuritas as the financial advisor of the project.

Matrix Concepts through PT Matrix Perkasa Indonesia owns 30% equity. Agung Sedayu Group and Salim Group through PT Bangun Kosambi Sukses jointly own 40% equity in PT Fin Centerindo Satu and the remaining is owned by PT Fin Centerindo Dua.

"This is a momentous milestone which not only marks our entry into the promising Indonesian market, one of the world's most populous countries but also the Group's expanding international profile after our Australian investments, as we plan for a continued presence here.

"The launch of Menara Syariah Twin Towers represents the first phase of our participation in developing the Islamic



Financial District in Pantai Indah Kapuk 2 (PIK 2), envisaged to be the next financial centre of Jakarta. The project aims to attract leading international and domestic corporations to create a vibrant international commercial hub in the up and coming PIK 2 township.

"We look forward to a long term and fruitful collaboration with our joint venture partners to establish a world-class and highly renowned Islamic Financial District in PIK 2." Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah bin Mohamad Amin, chairman of Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad said, during the launch ceremony that evening at Swissotel, Pantai Indah Kapuk, Jakarta.

Marine Christmas @ Bandar Sri Sendayan

7 December 2019 – Thousands of visitors have been flocking to Matrix Concepts' Marine Christmas at d'Tempat Country Club, Bandar Sri Sendayan from 3:00pm to 10:00pm every weekend in the month of December.

This 2019, Matrix has collaborated with Aquaria KLCC where d'Tempat Country Club has been transformed into an extravagant *Under The Sea* world complete with live sharks and marine life.

The main attraction was the 10-foot large aquarium featuring three live sharks with their feeding time scheduled at 4:00pm and 6:00pm every Saturday and Sunday in December, by the courageous *Scuba Santa*.

Children were able to learn about various starfish and others such as *Blue Tang L*, *Nigger Trigger*, *Green Brittle Star Fish* and corals at the *Touch Pool*.

Other activities for the whole families were the *King Neptune*

Magic Show, *Synchronised Water Ballet*, *Ocean Snow Globe* and *Sharkfin Hat Workshops*.

"The most wonderful time of the year has come again. With an extravagant *Under the Sea* scene, Christmas celebration for this year will bring something different and amazing for the community," said Lim Kok Yee, chief marketing officer of Matrix Concepts.

Marine Christmas by Matrix Concepts celebrates one of the major festivals in Malaysia, promoting harmony and understanding while bringing all communities together for a 'cheery' and unique marine experience especially in its integrated township of Bandar Sri Sendayan.



2019 Christmas Gathering

19 December 2019 – The inaugural 2019 Christmas Gathering kicked off with a rousing cheer as almost 280 associates gathered for a photo shoot with the Board of Directors and senior management of Matrix Concepts in front of d'Tempat Country Club.

Group managing director, Ho Kong Soon, presented the growth of Matrix Concepts from its listing year in 2013 to present year with the audited accounts and thanked the staff for their contributions in bringing Matrix Concepts to where it is today.

"When external parties asked what are the contributing factors to the success of Matrix Concepts, I always tell them that it is the team. Everyone in the organisation plays an important role. Each one of us puts in the time and effort, and foremost, it is always in the interest of the company.

"It is not one person and as a team, we are strong. Our communication must be open and transparent in order for us to evolve, innovate and change for the better." Ho said in his speech during the dinner at the Ballroom.

Dato Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman in his remarks advised those in attendance to emulate good traits of professionalism, especially in taking accountability and ownership.

Ng Yee Ming, head of human resource & administration said that this year's gathering signified the end of 2019 while a great start awaits the new year.



The top performers at the gathering.

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(689638-X)

Head Office
Wisma Matrix, No. 57, Jalan Tun Dr Ismail,
70200 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan D.K. Malaysia
T +606 764 2688 F +606 764 6288

Matrix Gallery @ d'Tempat
PT 12053, Jalan Pantai Dagangan Sendayan 1
71950 Bandar Sri Sendayan, Negeri Sembilan D.K. Malaysia
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(Four from left) Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah, chairman of Matrix Concepts; Datin Nor Simah, chairman's wife; Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman together with the management team officiating the Minangkabau Raya event.

Minangkabau Raya Enlivens Bandar Sri Sendayan

8 Jun 2019 – Raya celebration continues in Bandar Sri Sendayan with Minangkabau Raya on 8 and 9 June 2019 at d'Tempat Country Club.

The decorations at d'Tempat Country Club featured a very distinct Minangkabau arched porch, complete with beautiful art pieces and ornaments for a unique Raya festive mood.

Minangkabau Raya celebrates Negeri Sembilan's unique Malay culture that was brought over from Sumatra by its forefathers, or to be more accurate, its foremothers.

Activities such as batik workshops, congkak, traditional games and bullock cart rides were available from 3:00pm to 10:00pm on these two days, besides the cat show and mini zoo.

The appearances of local popular mascots Boboiboy and Didi & Friends brought much excitement to children and families.

Minangkabau Raya was launched by Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah, chairman of Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad and Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts.

Tarian Piring and Gendang Tambua Tansa, the state's traditional dance and drums performances completed the launch ceremony.





Variation of scrumptious dishes ushering in Raya vibes.

Chef Wan's Open House At Resort Homes

22 June 2019 – Local celebrities Hunny Madu and Chef Wan brightened the Aidilfitri Open House celebration with the residents and community at Resort Homes.

Held at the Lunaria III Show House at the Resort Homes for the first time, the event was packed to the brim with interesting activities for visitors, including a Middle Eastern ensemble performance and music. Malaysian traditional games such as batu seremban, congkak, sepak takraw and giant snake dam were played, an ode to the nostalgia of childhood.

Visitors were delighted with Raya dishes served during the festive event, like the ketupat, leman, and chicken rendang while getting to meet and greet the two celebrities present. Guests also enjoyed the resort-style atmosphere of the Lunaria III homes, an exclusive residential property offering 2-storey terrace houses of 22' x 85' with four bedrooms and four bathrooms. Prices for the homes start at a modest RM748,888 with full amenities. Lunaria III is located in the prime district of Bandar Sri Sendayan, easily accessible via major roads and highways.



Special appearance by the local celebrities, Chef Wan and Hunny Madu, brightens up the Aidilfitri Open House.



(Five from right) Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts; YB Nicole Tan Lee Koon, Negeri Sembilan Women, Family and Welfare Affairs Committee chairperson; Datin Yong Chou Lian, group executive deputy chairman's wife right before the flag off.

13th My Earth, My Home Family Run-Walk-Fun

21 July 2019 – Malaysian Fo Guang Buddhist Association Seremban Branch, organised My Earth, My Home – a charity walk with the theme of Family Run-Walk-Fun at d'Tempat Country Club, Bandar Sri Sendayan.



This charity programme is one of the platforms for Malaysian Fo Guang Buddhist Association Seremban Branch to promote a culture of peace and national harmony among all Malaysians irrespective of race or religion.

With over 1,200 participants arriving as early as 6:30am, the event started off with a Zumba session, followed by a 3km walk. The event saw participation from Matrix Concepts, residents of Bandar Sri Sendayan, and pupils from within the communities in Negeri Sembilan.

The event was flagged off by YB Nicole Tan Lee Koon, Negeri Sembilan Women, Family and Welfare Affairs Committee chairperson; YB Ng Chin Tsai, Negeri Sembilan state assemblyman; Dato' Lee Tian Hock, founder and executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts; and Datin Yong Chou Lian, organising chairperson cum president, Malaysia Buddhist Association, Seremban Branch.



(Two From left) YB Nicole Tan Lee Koon, Negeri Sembilan Women, Family and Welfare Affairs Committee chairperson; receiving certificate from Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts, witnessed by Datin Yong Chou Lian, group executive deputy chairman's wife (Far left).

"My Earth, My Home is intended to advocate the awareness on enhancing a healthy lifestyle where we participate more in family-oriented sports activities. It is hoped that this event promotes positive outcomes in realising the aim towards unity. We walk together for peace and harmony in a multi-racial and multi-religious country like Malaysia," said Datin Yong Chou Lian, organising chairperson cum president, Malaysia Buddhist Association, Seremban branch.



(Center) Haji Mustaza Bin Musa, head of authority cum community liaison of Matrix Concepts, presented the mock key to Haji Zamzam bin Yusof, chairman of Sheikh Haji Ahmad Mosque (third from left); witnessed by representatives from Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (JAINS) and the mosque members.

Van Jenazah For Masjid Sheikh Haji Ahmad

23 July 2019 – Matrix Concepts handed over a van jenazah to Sheikh Haji Ahmad Mosque as part of a continuing effort in its corporate social responsibility.

The sponsored van was first announced by the chairman of Matrix Concepts, Dato' Haji Mohamad Haslah bin Mohamad Amin, during the final phase of completion on 11 April 2019, which was also attended by YAB Dato' Seri Haji Aminuddin bin Harun, Menteri Besar Negeri Sembilan.

Present during the handover ceremony were Haji Mustaza bin Musa, head of authority cum community liaison of Matrix Concepts, Haji Zamzam bin Yusof, chairman of Sheikh Haji

Ahmad Mosque; witnessed by representatives from Majlis Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (MAINS) with Ustaz Danial Farhan from Jabatan Agama Islam Negeri Sembilan (JAINS); and members of nearby mosques and surau.

"The mosque is completed and we make good on our promise. The van will assist the management of the mosque to carry out its duties effectively during funerals," said Haji Mustaza Musa.



Local Agenda 21 Programme

2 November 2019 – Local Agenda 21 (LA21) is a community programme, initiated by Majlis Perbandaran Nilai (MPN).

Partnered by Matrix Concepts, this programme has been extended to encompass Taman Awam, Nusari Bayu 1 in Bandar Sri Sendayan.

"The objective of the programme is to instill civic-mindedness and promote eco-initiatives within the residing community and developers as well as government agencies towards a sustainable development," said YB Tuan Haji Ismail bin Haji Ahmad, Adun Labu and Chairman of Rural Development.

Attending the programme was Pn. Marhizah bt Abdul Razak,

Secretary of Nilai Municipal Council, while Matrix Concepts was represented by Ho Kong Soon, group managing director and Tan Sze Chee, chief development officer.

One thousand fish fry were released into the reservoir with 150 mud balls of micro-organism.

Among the activities were tree planting, painting of handrails and gazebo, cutting of grass, removal of fallen trees and dry timber and levelling space for 'herb garden', as well as exhibitions by SWM Environment.



(From left) Dato' Mohamad Zin, chairman of the resident's association Nusari Bayu 1; Azhar, council member MPN; Rusyati, director of engineering department, MPN; Suhairie, chairman of the resident's association Bandar Sri Sendayan. Pn. Marhizah, secretary, MPN; Ho Kong Soon together with YB Tuan Hj Ismail Bin Hj Ahmad, released thousands of fish fry and mud balls into the reservoir as a launching gimmick





Visitors were enjoying taking photos in front of the entrance.

Two Nights In Bangkok @ Bandar Sri Sendayan

16 November 2019 – About 6,000 people thronged the streets of Bangkok in Bandar Sri Sendayan for two nights, 16 and 17 November 2019.



Visitors were happily taking photos at the photo booth with the durian fruit prop.



Fully dressed in Thailand traditional clothes, a Thai woman was ready to entertain visitors with the 'tuk-tuk'.

Carnelian Park in Sendayan Merchant Square, Bandar Sri Sendayan was transformed into Thailand's *City Of Angels*.

The aisles of the mocked Chatuchak Weekend Market were flooded with visitors. Giving the fest a more genuine hint of Thai culture, more than 30 variety of food and merchandise stalls were flown in from Thailand, filling the Floating Market and Maeklong Railway Market.

Besides food and knick-knacks, there were art classes like Krathong Folding Workshops providing families and children an opportunity to squeeze their creative juices while folding banana leaves into lotus-shaped floating receptacles.

For those visitors who were into cooking, Thai traditional food classes and workshops teaching Luk Chup and Miang Kham dishes were conducted.

A number of lucky visitors walked away with prizes of shopping vouchers and home electrical appliances from the exciting lucky draw conducted hourly between 5pm to 9pm at Matrix Hijayu Aman Show Village. It was an exhilarating fun-filled two nights in Bangkok only at Bandar Sri Sendayan.



Original Thailand food sellers promoting Thai food, such as mango sticky rice, while wearing traditional Thai costumes.

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Head Office
Wisma Matrix, No 57, Jalan Tun Dr. Ismail,
70200 Seremban, Negeri Sembilan D.K. Malaysia
T +606 792 2888 F +606 792 2885
Matrix @ d'Tempat
PT 12653, Jalan Pusat Dagangan Serendayan 1,
71950 Bandar Sri Sendayan, Negeri Sembilan D.K. Malaysia
T +606 792 2868 F +606 792 2878
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As Fit As Can Be

Throw on some workout gears and tie those trainers. These are the fitness and wellness trends that are still sweeping and staying ahead of the game in the new decade.

Wearable Technologies

In 2006, Nike announced its collaboration with Apple, creating the Nike+ fitness tracking kit which was embedded into shoes so users can track their distance, time, pace and calories burned during a workout. The activity tracker gave concept to Fitbit, who in 2008, launched its first wristband tracker that went further than the Nike+, allowing wearers to trace their steps and sleep patterns. Less than a decade later, Apple jumped on the wagon, launching its first Apple Watch and the rest can be said to be history.

In 2018, more than 53 million fitness and activity trackers were sold worldwide. The industry is now valued at over USD28 billion with Fitbit, Apple and Garmin leading sales across the board. China-based companies have also joined in the turf with technology companies Huawei and Xiaomi producing their own versions at a fraction of the cost.



Times ... they are a'changing. Once just a simple regimen to stay fit and improve on wellness, the fitness landscape has gone through massive changes in the recent decades, gratuitously brought on by new technologies, merging of techniques and old rules rewritten new, trialed and tested, for quick and fast results.

Every year, some new 'gym fad' trends. Take for example the latest viral fitness trend to take over the internet: #75HARD. Designed by podcast host Andy Frisella, the challenge lasts for 75 days and involves a strict diet, twice a day exercises at 45 minutes per session, and a daily reading of upwards 10 pages of any self-help book. No cheat days. The challenge is clearly not for the feeble hearted, and as one influencer on the challenge quipped: "It's not as much a fitness challenge as it is a discipline challenge." Followed to the tee, results are guaranteed as #75HARD pushes your body beyond its customary usage. But as with all things being changed quickly, it's mind over matter.

The process of getting fit and staying fit is no longer a one-man journey. With technology and shareable data, it is now more easier than ever to compare notes and seek tips best suited for a specific goal.

A new decade has arrived and with the new year, new resolutions are set to steamroll into the best possible version of oneself: physically, mentally and emotionally. Maintaining a healthy lifestyle not only improves the quality of one's life, but it also saves money in the long run. For 2020, we take a look at fitness trends that will continue to stick through the years ahead and others that will evolve, emerging as a new fad but holding similar attributes as regimens of the past.

According to a Worldwide Survey of Fitness Trends 2020, the top five most important trends for the fitness and wellness sector globally will be in wearable technologies, high-intensity-interval-training (HIIT), group trainings, free weights and personal training.

While it's hard to prove that data collected from wearable technologies can improve on overall fitness and health, it offers a crucial set of data for its users to help in their diet choices and alert them of any irregularities. As with all things, there are pros and cons. The limits of fitness trackers lie in its short battery life and the occasional miscalculation in heart rates.

Technologies are not fail-proof; however, being able to make informed decisions regarding one's workout or diet choice based on information can only do more good than harm. Activity trackers are highly recommended by medical professionals, especially patients with previous heart conditions, high blood pressure and/or obesity.



High Intensity Interval Training

It has been tried and tested. Quick and effective. Burns fat and can be done with or without equipment. Easy to pick up and even easier to master. High Intensity Interval Training, or HIIT, has been practiced by athletes since the 1900s before it got its updated allure in 2014. Popular among runners for the speed play, HIIT is a manual switch made through varying training intensity to swap between a quickened heart rate to a medium-to-slow heart rate. This switch allowed sprinters and runners to spread out their stamina, completing a race in a controlled manner based on the energy level they have left.

Scientists and sports medicine professionals have been studying why this set of training in particular burned more fat and built more muscles in less time than other training sets. And in 1996, skating coach and professor at the National Institute of Fitness and Sports in Japan, Izumi Tabata, released his six-week long studies of two groups of sportsman on the effectiveness of HIIT. The group that was subjected to HIIT was found to have improved on both aerobic and anaerobic fitness levels by close to 30 per cent. Izumi Tabata is also the founder and creator of exercise programme Tabata, known for its 20:10 seconds exercise to rest training.

Why this training system will continue to be red hot into the new decade is without question. To learn more about HIIT and how to get started, read the article to follow on page 32.

Group Trainings

Why go el solo when you can team up when powering up?

Group training is a fairly new concept, dating back to around the 1970s when fitness instructors took to front stage with a boombox, playing the latest hits, adding movements to rhythm. In its early days, group training incorporated dance and aerobics; today, group training extends to yoga, resistance training, kickboxing, Muay Thai, TRX, and stationary cycling, to name a few.

For gyms to be considered fully comprehensive, one form or another of group training must be offered at the facility. Why does group training appeal to so many? One, it's a great way to meet new friends. The downtime between the start and end of a class allows participants to socialise — not to mention that adrenalin can serve as a guise for courage. Training together rather than alone makes one feel a part of something so at completion, it is naturally to feel team spirit. Another reason is that gyms can often be intimidating. For new gym-goers, the intimidation can be overwhelming; whereas in a classroom, one can easily blend and take stock.

Group training programmes are designed to fit every fitness level — a sort of 'do at your pace' kind of environment. While there are specialised trainings that are for more advanced participants — like Advanced Hatha Yoga or Advanced Spin — anyone who sticks to a particular workout will eventually gain enough muscle awareness and movements to advance to the next level.

Group training is also a great way to learn new fitness routines by professionals at a fraction of the cost, or at no cost with an all-inclusive membership type.

Free Weights

Perhaps one of the most versatile workouts that targets specific muscle groups is training with free weights. Different from weight machines, free weights have no restriction on movement and comes in a variety of weights and sizes for comfort. Free weights include barbells, medicine balls, dumbbells, sandbells and kettleballs. Most fitness gurus rally behind including free weights into a workout routine for its superior and precise muscle target.

Exercises involving free weights can easily be meshed up and rearranged to fit one's day-to-day stamina and/or desired muscle development. For example, if one is exercising weights with deadlifts with weighted squats on one day, leg exercises can be skipped the next day for biceps and triceps training.

When it comes to building muscle, there's a clear disparity between strength by mass and useable mass by strength. While weight machines can train strength just as well as free weights, the former also limits sports performance and pose a higher risk of injuries with increased activities. Free weights have been attributed to building functional muscles since the position of your body is placed by how your body moves.

Furthermore, training with free weights also helps with coordination and balance.



Personal Training

Like group training, personal training also ranked among the top five fitness and wellness trends for 2020. With a slew of various types of workouts and equipment, the proper and right way to execute a workout can be daunting. Hiring a personal trainer not only teaches one how to use equipment, but how to use them properly to achieve a desired goal.

It is not uncommon for a new gym membership to offer a one-week or one-time trial with their in-house personal trainer. During the hour session, they may test your cardio, stamina and endurance; whereby they are able to chisel out a total workout plan, customised to one's weight loss or training goals. Personal trainers are trained professionals, and beyond prescribing a workout regimen, they also serve as encouragement.

That add-on pep talk might not seem like much, but often, it is that one brief moment that makes or breaks the spirit to continue on. Lastly, there is a right and a wrong way to train. Trainers are able to instruct the usage of equipment to prevent injuries.

HIIT It To Lose It!

By Darren Yeoh



The quick, fail-proof way to burn fat and stay fit.

For most modern Malaysians slogging through a daily 9 to 6, maintaining a consistent fitness regimen can be quite challenging. However, it is still possible to keep up with your health goals even if you can only spare a few minutes each day.

High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) is a vigorous form of exercises characterised by intense bursts of activity followed by rest. It creates a condition where your muscles are deprived of oxygen and forces them into overdrive. This maximises muscle gain and burns fat at the same time. The best part? You don't even need the gym or any special equipment to get started!

Here are 5 benefits of HIIT and why you should try it, too:

It burns more calories in a shorter amount of time

According to a study published in the Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research, a typical HIIT session burns 25-30% more calories compared to other forms of exercise within the same amount of time.

That's because during a vigorous HIIT workout, your metabolic rate is drastically increased due to a spike in oxygen consumption, allowing you to achieve better fitness results in a short time. It's the perfect fitness plan for those who can't afford 2-hour long sessions at the gym.

HIIT allows your body to burn fat even while you sleep

With most forms of exercise, your body burns calories during the time that you're active but quickly resets once you're at



rest. However, due to the intense exertion during a HIIT workout, your body's repair cycle goes into hyper drive, allowing you to continually burn calories up to 24 hours after you're done. As mentioned, oxygen consumption during a HIIT workout is drastically increased, a phenomenon known as Excess Post-Exercise Oxygen Consumption (EPOC). Not only does this allow you to burn fat more efficiently, it also allows your body to continue doing so hours after your workout, even during sleep.

It promotes cardiovascular health

With HIIT, it's easier to achieve an anaerobic state of physical conditioning (where your body is oxygen-deprived, causing your heart to beat much faster) which helps make the heart stronger and promote better blood flow.

This in turn has been shown to lower blood pressure and the risk of congestive heart failure, in addition to improving cardio fitness and general health.

HIIT Burns Fat but Preserves Lean Muscles

The harsh truth about dieting is that as you lose fat, you inadvertently also start losing muscle mass. HIIT is one of the few exercise routines that ensure all the pounds being shed are from fat stored and not hard-earned muscles.

HIIT sessions not only help you lose weight, it also preserves lean muscle mass and builds endurance. This allows those who



consistently do HIIT to get stronger and potentially work out even longer.

You can work out anywhere, anytime

Finally, one distinct advantage HIIT has over hitting the gym is that it allows you to exercise anywhere, anytime. There is no need to fork out extra money for a gym membership or home-based equipment to keep in shape. In fact, all you need is a little bit of open space!

A typical HIIT workout relies mostly on body weight and the ability to quickly elevate one's heart rate. To that end, exercises like high knees, jumping jacks, and sprints are all good examples of HIIT workouts to incorporate into your HIIT routine.

Getting Started

If you're thinking of jumping onto the HIIT bandwagon, here's a simple beginner's set to help you get started:

Exercise time: 12 minutes Equipment: none

There are only 3 move sets in this circuit. The idea is to complete each set within a minute and rest until the next minute begins. The faster you finish a set, the more time you have to rest. Make sure to maintain proper form and technique though!

Minute 1: 15 squats

Stand straight with your feet hip-width apart. Tighten your core and lower your body as if sitting, making sure that your knees don't push beyond your toes. And then stand up.

Minute 2: 15 burpees

Begin in a standing position and move into a squat position. Place your hands on the ground, and kick your feet back to assume a plank position. Immediately jump back into the squat position and stand up.

Minute 3: 10 superman holds

Lie face down on the mat/floor with your arms outstretched in front of you. Raise your arms and legs to form a "U" shape with your body and hold. Return to plank position and repeat.

Repeat the circuit 4 times

The more you practise HIIT, the better and more efficient you will be. So, feel the burn and remember, in the immortalised words of Deadpool circa 2016: "Maximum effort!"



(Five from left) Dato' Noordin bin Mohd Yatib, vice chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation; Dato' Logendran K. Narayanasamy, chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation, presenting the donations to Vasanthi, chairperson of Shelter Home for Abused Women and Children.

A Joyous Deepavali With Shelter Home



19 October 2019 – Matrix Concepts Foundation (MCF) contributed baking equipment to Shelter Home for (Abused) Women and Children Seremban this Deepavali.

Present during the handover ceremony were Dato' Logendran A/L K. Narayanasamy, chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation; Dato' Noordin bin Yatib, vice chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation; Vasanthi Naidu Subramaniam, chairperson Shelter Home Seremban; and staff from Matrix Concepts Holdings Berhad.

While Shelter Home's baking classes are initiated by Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Negeri Sembilan, Matrix Concepts Foundation decided to complete the class with full baking equipment, including three stand mixers, a two-door chiller, cooling racks, and others.

The baking classes will benefit 25 underprivileged and single mothers to make a living and give them hope for the future. Led by a volunteer chef, the baking classes will be conducted every Sunday with 20 students from the home.

The baking classes are open to residents and non-residents as the core purpose is to assist underprivileged women to be self-sufficient.

The uniqueness of the home is that it is committed to helping those in need. From time to time, residents of the shelter may change but the home continues its warmth and operation regardless.

Accommodating up to 30 people at any one time, the home is always open to accepting abused women and children without bias.

The Shelter Home for (Abused) Women and Children Seremban was founded in 1993 and is registered under Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Negeri Sembilan.



(Front row, from left) Vasanthi, chairperson of Shelter Home for Abused Women and Children; Dato' Logendran K. Narayanasamy, chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation; Dato' Noordin bin Mohd Yatib, vice chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation, officiating one of the bakery equipment.

World Hospice Day

16 November 2019 – Continuing its annual Corporate Social Responsibility programme, Matrix Concepts Foundation (MCF) contributed RM30,000 to Pertubuhan Hospice Negeri Sembilan for the fourth consecutive year.



Held at Seremban City Kingdom Ballroom, the Fund-Raising Charity Dinner in conjunction with World Hospice Day 2019 was organised by Pertubuhan Hospice Negeri Sembilan.

It was attended by YAB Dato Seri Aminuddin bin Harun, Chief Minister of Negeri Sembilan; YB Tuan Veerapan A/L Superamaniam, exco and chairman of the Health,

Environment, Co-operatives and Consumerism Committee Negeri Sembilan; YB Puan Nicole Tan Lee, exco and chairperson of Women, Family and Welfare Committee Negeri Sembilan.

Also present was Dato' Logendran A/L K. Narayanasamy, chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation.



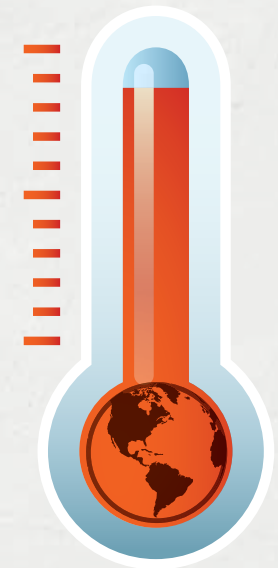
(From left) Dato' Logendran K. Narayanasamy, chairman of Matrix Concepts Foundation, presenting the mock cheque to Dr Anthony Gilbert, president of Pertubuhan Hospice; witnessed by YAB Dato' Seri Hj Aminuddin bin Harun, chief minister of Negeri Sembilan and Dr Jamali bin Wangiman, chairman of Pertubuhan Hospice.





Climate Change: What Are You Pretending Not To Know?

Too pertinent to ignore; too ignorant to know what to do about it. Climate change is the biggest trending topic of 2019.



The new face of climate change Greta Thunberg has elevated the conversation to new height, drawing populace strikes and protests across the globe so that no one can turn a blind eye to the dire straits the environment is in. In November 2019, Collins Dictionary named 'climate strike' the most important and trendiest word of the year out of a selection of 9.5 billion words. Across over 150 countries and 4,500 locations during a week-long organised protest staged in September known as the Global Week for Future, an estimated 7.5 billion people took to the streets to raise awareness and bring to the forefront concerns regarding climate change.

The protest was the largest in recorded history on the issue. Students skipped school in order to participate, coinciding with the United Nations Youth Climate Action Summit and United Nations Climate Action Summit, respectively. Pledges were sought from protesters for their governments to prioritise climate change into policies, including a push on the Green New Deal to reduce fossil fuel projects, protect biodiversity across the planet, preserve indigenous lands, invest in sustainable agriculture and curb pollution. Global warming and environmental deterioration is an entirely human outcome.

Scientists across the board has warned that we as a species have until 2030 to deal with climate change or risk catastrophe. "We need to get the world on a path to net zero CO2 emissions by the mid-century. That's a huge transformation, so if we don't make a good start on it during the 2020s, we won't be able to get there at a reasonable cost," writes climate researcher Drew Shindell, Duke University, in the 2018 UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report.

According to this, there's only 10 years left to "avoid really bad outcomes. We have to be on a realistic glide path towards a carbon-free global economy by 2030," said Scott Denning, professor of Atmospheric Science, Colorado State University, adding: "But it's so oversimplified that it leads to comically bad misconceptions about how to get there, conjuring up ridiculous cartoon imagery suggesting we just go on with life normally for the next 10 years and then the world ends."

The challenges with tackling climate change on a global level are many, including costs, climate change deniers, sluggish governments, political agendas, the complex link between emissions and daily human activities, and a lack of agreeable infrastructure to solve the problem. It is potentially the biggest issue in modern society that will affect everyone since there is but one Planet Earth and we all live under the same atmosphere.

To contribute in whatever small manner possible, it is first important to understand the difference between global warming and climate change. Though they are correlated, the issues dealt and classified differs.

Global Warming versus Climate Change

Words matter, period. Global warming and climate change are not interchangeable though they share subtle similarities and both refer to environmental impacts. However, in recent years 'global warming' has become a causation for 'climate change', so in layman's term, climate change is the umbrella in which global warming falls under, including a slew of other causes. Global warming refers only to the rising average Earth's surface temperature due to greenhouse gases.

Greenhouse gases are a collection of toxic gas emissions that, at an increased level, are harmful to the human body and contribute to air pollution. These emissions are generated by human activities, mainly from fossil burning and deforestation. Since the start of the Industrial Revolution (mid-1700's), carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased by nearly 50 per cent and



has no clear sight of hankering down. By 2020, the change to the Earth's surface temperature would have raised by 2° Celsius. And if it continues to emit at this rate, by 2026, the surface temperature would build up by 10° Celsius, rippling effects that would deem earth uninhabitable for many life form.

Global warming is one big item under climate change. Climate change refers to a long-term median change of Earth's climate, across all region and aspect — including precipitation, winds, ocean currents, volcanic activities, rising sea levels, melting glaciers and changing seasonal temperatures. Global warming is a cause while climate change is the effect.

Global warming and climate change are not interchangeable though they share subtle similarities and both refer to environmental impacts.

The Greta Effect

At 16 years old, Greta Thunberg addressed the 2019 UN's Climate Action Summit in New York City. "My message is that we'll be watching you. This is all wrong. I shouldn't be up here. I should be back in school on the other side of the ocean. Yet you all come to us young people for hope. How dare you!" she reprimands the audience. "You have stolen my dream and my childhood with your empty words. And yet, I'm one of the lucky ones. People are suffering. People are dying. Entire ecosystems are collapsing. We are in the beginning of mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!"

The Swedish teenager stepped out of school to stand outside the Swedish government in 2018, calling for more stringent actions be taken on global warming. Holding up a sign that reads 'school strike for climate change', she persisted every day until a small community of enraged activists and students rallied behind her. That same year she addressed the UN's Climate Change Conference in Poland for the first time, joining the Dalai Lama, Al Gore and Sir David Attenborough on the importance of tackling climate change while there's still limited time left.

Thunberg has chosen to live a life with minimal carbon footprint, influencing her parents to do the same. What brought her

onto the global stage was her insistence of quitting air travel (a major contributor to greenhouse gas emission) and traveled to New York City by sailing for 15 days on a solar panel laden yacht. Her stand and commitment to tackling climate change have drawn more inspiration than criticism, with millions following in her stead as evident from the September 2019 Global Week for Future strike.

Her influence has also started to impact education. In November 2019, Italy announced that it will mandate public schools to teach a minimum of 33 hours a school year on the subject of climate change. While other governments haven't joined in on the initiative to educate on sustainable lifestyle for youth, classrooms everywhere with likeminded teachers are taking matters into their own hands and incorporating climate change into their syllabus. The Greta effect is just the spine of a generation shift towards sustainable choices that will ultimately force governments and businesses to re-envision their model.

As important as it is for teachers to educate climate change, it is also crucial that parents get on the bandwagon to learn about the effects of climate change and teach children about sustainable consumption. After all, the planet will be left to them in just a few decades time.



Photo credit: Wall Street International Magazine

Deforestation

Planet Earth is flammable, so let's just get that out of the way. Wildfires have been a thing for hundreds of millions of years, caused by volcanic eruptions, lightning and dry climates. But mother nature is graceful and resilient when untampered. However, deforestation has resulted in a major disparity between the Earth's natural ability to replenish its vegetation and the atmospheric balance to keep wildfires controllable.

In August 2019, the biggest rainforest in the world, the Amazon in Brazil, burned three times more than the previous year, causing global outrage and criticism to the Brazilian government. Unlike hundreds of millions of years ago, the wildfire that erupted at this capacity was not brought on simply by lightning, but deforestation.

Deforestation is a practice defined by the permanent removal of trees and fauna to make room for grazing or agriculture, timber fuel, construction or manufacturing. It is the absolute conversion of a landmass into something other than what it was originally intended. This practice contributes to 10 per cent of overall greenhouse gas emissions. Deforestation mainly occurs in the tropics, affecting mostly underdeveloped countries that lie south of the equator — Brazil, Dominican Republic, Indonesia, Malaysia, Colombia, etc. Because these countries are laden with economic development, they sell their land in order to make way for palm oil plantations and others.

According to The World Bank, roughly 10 million square kilometres of forests have been destroyed since the start of the 20th century. The matter is pressing not simply as a result of it causing wildfires, but because trees is the Earth's natural defence system against greenhouse gases. Wildlife are largely lost from burning of forests which also results in an imbalance of biodiversity.

A strong but dimly guided movement has been adapted by consumers over the past ten years, demanding that supermarkets stop carrying goods that use palm oil as an ingredient. For manufacturers, palm oil is a cheap and functional additives to produce food and hygiene products, which allows big brands to keep costs low and consumption high.

As consumers, we can help tackle deforestation by making conscious purchasing decision, such as foregoing food and products with palm oil. A list of brands from the World Wild Life Organisation can assist in buying more consciously. One can also assist in planting trees whenever possible, going paperless, choosing wood grade products that are listed with the Forest Stewardship Council, recycling and cutting down on meat-base food.

According to The World Bank, roughly 10 million square kilometres of forests have been destroyed since the start of the 20th century.



Our Water, Our Life Source

In 2018, a video of a sea turtle with a straw in its nostril went viral. The cringe-inducing extraction sparked outrage worldwide and has since mushroomed into a campaign that calls for the ban of single use plastics. Single use plastics are so ubiquitous with our current fast-paced society, being found in everyday products like straws, grocery bags, disposable water bottles, cutleries and food containers. The issue here is that plastic has an extremely long lifespan, taking anywhere between half a century to 1,000 years to decompose.

Often, single use plastics are found alongside with wastes that would otherwise be naturally decompose. Due to a lack of wastes separation, landfills across the globe have become unmanageable. And from unmanageable landfills there are the issues of toxin, leachate and greenhouse gases.

Leachate is a liquid substance that occurs when wastes break down. The substance seeps into the soil and groundwater, entering water channels that are toxic to all life forms. Aside from the dumping of single use plastics directly into the ocean, its root damage extends far beyond water surface contamination. In a report released by One Green Planet Organisation, 180 million tonnes of toxic chemicals and pollutants are dumped into our waters every year. These wastes include fertiliser, pesticides and animal wastes for agricultural purposes.



Water is a scarcity and it becomes more scarce as larger bodies of water are contaminated.

Water is the source of life. When water becomes undrinkable, life will cease to exist. While it appears that the Earth has a sizeable quantity of water for consumption, in reality, only 1 per cent of the solvent is drinkable. Water is a scarcity and it becomes more scarce as larger bodies of water are contaminated.

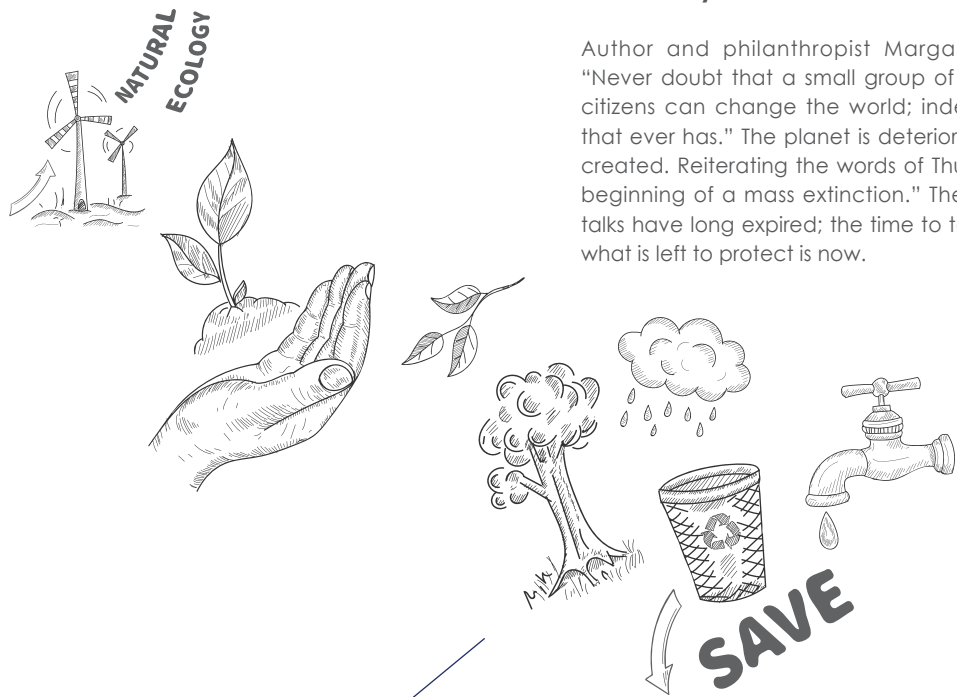
While single use plastics take second place to the overall plastic pollutants in the water, it is one where every single individual fall culprit. One advisable and easy change in daily habits that can lessen carbon footprint in the waters is by sorting wastes; plastics with plastics, cans with cans, food wastes with food wastes. By sorting trash, it is easier for treatment plants to deal with wastes, which will lower down toxic gases and leachate production.

Another obvious switch is by curbing the use of single use plastics in general.



Do what you can

Author and philanthropist Margaret Mead once said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." The planet is deteriorating faster than it was created. Reiterating the words of Thunberg, "We are at the beginning of a mass extinction." The time for inaction and talks have long expired; the time to take action and protect what is left to protect is now.



3RS FOR DUMMIES

It's not rocket science! You know the items, here are guides to recycle them properly:

- All paper can be recycled, granted that they are not sealed with a plastic laminate
- All glass jars and bottles can be recycled
- Plastic bottles and containers that are marked can be recycled; however, they must be sorted separately from the lids/caps
- Steel tins and aluminium cans should be washed and cleaned of any liquid
- Light bulbs are not recyclable, so do not sort them together with glasswares
- Nappies (diapers) are not recyclable
- Takeaway coffee cups are non-recyclable despite it taking the appearance of paper. This is because in order to hold the solvent, it must be lined with plastic
- Styrofoam and bubble wraps are reusable but non-recyclable
- Batteries are recyclable, but not sorted within your common metal wastes. Contact your local council for a list of drop off points. Same applies for retired electronics and cartridges
- Paper towels/napkins and wet naps are not recyclable. Once contaminated, they must be sorted along with general wastes
- Medical syringes and bottles cannot the recycled
- Plastic toys cannot be recycled
- Most apartment complexes and housing districts have recycling bins. Locate them and do weekly sorting
- Donate pre-loved clothing to your local non-profit organisations



Starter Guide To Starter Business

Things to bear in mind when starting a new business that the internet fails to tell you.

Malaysia, oh Malaysia! It's easy enough to say that statistically, the country's overall economic standing has improved across the board over the past two decades. However, the trickle down effect is less of a trickling down and more of a plateau in living standard and uphill climb in terms of cost of living. As of the most recent Household Income & Expenditure statistics released by the Department of Statistics Malaysia (OP), the median income of a Malaysian household sits at MYR 5,228. While that is a record 6 per cent jump from the previous year, the costs of living continue to rise in urban areas. According to Numbeo, a single person's monthly expenditure is over MYR 2,000 without housing rental, which is roughly 40 per cent of the median income.

To say that living in Malaysia costs a lot is an overstatement. But to consider it affordable for the average folk is remissible. Because of this financial disparity, earning a side income to make ends meet is at the forefront of life planning. Apart from that reality, Jobstreet Malaysia reports that 78 per cent of employees are unhappy with their current job, mainly due to dissatisfaction with their work scope (34%) and/or their relationship with their immediate supervisor (21%).

It is estimated that the average person clocks up to 90,000 hours working within a lifetime. That's nearly one-third of a person's life. A work-life balance in Malaysia is fiction, or rather, an impossibility cloaked as a daydream. While it is optimistic to think that things will start looking better soon enough, economists have pointed out that this is an uphill battle for all parties — individuals, households and the government.

Needless to say, starting a side business to obtain a bit of extra monthly income is not only an attractive option, but a segue way into a long-term passion career. Preparation beats chance, and by way of preparation is getting the basics down and strategising for continual growth so that you're not left with a mounting debt from pursuing a new business.

*Failure to launch is oftentimes due to impractical milestones
Overnight successes are rare and few.*

Do it on purpose

Dolly Parton famously said, "Find out who you are and do it on purpose." Since your work is something you spend one-third of your life doing, make sure it is something you enjoy. Perhaps in this moment of aspiration, you have yet to master the trade, 'starting' is a pinnacle step to get you closer to your goal. Whether the aspiration is to become a public speaker, cosmetics blogger or an on-demand trail mix maker, it's important to give yourself some leeway and a realistic timeline to gain momentum.

Failure to launch is oftentimes due to impractical milestones. Overnight successes are rare and few. What the eyes see from people who have made it and told their stories are the aftermath of unfailing persistence and commitment. Passion projects have to stem from a dedicated love for and of something. Perhaps some soul searching is required, but where the heart leads, the mind will follow.



Determine the type of ownership

If your business idea requires that you work with others, set some ground rules and appoint responsibilities as fitting. It is best to get the foundation of an operation solid before commencing work that ensues stress and discussions. However, if your business runs el solo, then look into establishing a sole proprietorship.

In Malaysia, registering a business is as easy as a completed application form with supporting documents and a registration fee ranging between MYR 30 - 100. The certification for operation is issued within one-hour of payment, and you're ready to go.

Don't skip this step, as penalty under the ROBA 1956 states that anyone found guilty of operating a business without registration can be fined up to MYR 50,000 and/or jailed for up to two years.

A company versus a brand

Don't get too caught up with naming a company, focus on the brand. A distinction has to be conveyed that a name of a company is in itself just a name and not the nature of the business, unless the name of the business is a clear description of the services and products provided. Why it's important to be detached from the company's name is that there are close to one million SMEs registered in Malaysia; the odds of being able to register an ordinary name is not without obstacles.

The more creative and innovative the name, the likelihood of it being approved is much higher than let's say ubiquitous names such as Biscuits Enterprise. Furthermore, it's important to look into digital marketing when first starting a company. Having web presence is crucial since more than 80 per cent of Malaysians interact with brands via social media and/or websites for more details. It is more helpful to consumers if the brand is in the forefront of digital presence rather than the company that created and owns the brand.

Take for example: Nestle currently owns the brand Maggi, but Maggi as a standalone has a web presence that is a reflection of the product rather than the mother company.

20:80 Budgeting

Whatever the capital investment to starting the business is, reserve 20 per cent overall for marketing efforts to be distributed within the forecast. Between the 3Fs — friends, families and fools — you'll also need to market directly to the remaining F: foreigners. In marketing terms, 'foreigners' mean the group of consumers that have never interacted with your brand, are 'foreign' to your business and/or are seeking to become acquainted.

While 20 per cent may frighten and read on the high side, consider that if you employ a sales force, they will need collateral in order to sell; otherwise it is dry talking without substance. Furthermore, people are more likely to engage with brands that have invested monetarily in its sales pitch as that reflects the company or brand's overall financial health, making it more trustworthy.



Be realistic with runways

The one thing that finds new entrepreneurs in thick waters is not being realistic with their preempted runway. As a plane takes off, it needs a certain clear road mileage in order to gain enough speed for flight. The same concept applies to starting a business. If there's a meagre capital to boot, it is important to gauge enough projects in a set timeframe to extend the runway as long as possible to see a return. If the company is built from gathered investment, it is crucial that spending kept to a tight budget in order to prevent loss at an early stage.

You'll know the formula is off track when you have to revisit your budgeting three months after kicking off. Being thrifty at the start allows for greater freedom later on when the brand is slightly more mature. It is also advisable to plan by quarters, stretching the runway to as minimal as 18 months and as realistic as two years.

Be brave, shamelessly

Share. Share. Overshare. The greatest marketing tool you possess is your ability to communicate your passion (or business) by any means possible — whether that means on social media accounts and/or with friends. The most effective form of marketing is still word of mouth. The transmission of a message or an endorsement by others vamps up the reputation/prestige of a brand quicker and more efficiently than any advertisement.

While the uproar of social media have knocked the cost of targeted advertising down by the truck loads, the audience reached may not be sustainable enough to break bank. Do away with the superfluous display of brand identity and invest in brand integrity.

Being thrifty at the start allows for greater freedom later on when the brand is slightly more mature.





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A Passage Of Time And Wonderment In Kluang, Johor

Known for its namesake coffee brew and historic landmarks, there's more than meets the eye in this upcoming neighbourhood in the southern state of Malaysia.

Johor is known for many things, namely being a gateway to Singapore as it shares the same maritime border as the latter country. Home to Legoland, TS Wonderland Themepark and Sanrio Hello Kitty Town, Johor is fast becoming a staple destination for international and domestic tourism. Along with its federal blueprint to build the state into an economic powerhouse, the residential market in Johor has also seen a spike in 2018 despite an overall slowdown of development in Malaysia.

In the 2018 Property Market Report released by the National Property Information Centre (Napic), the state of Johor reportedly clocked MYR 19.33 billion in property transactions, up nearly eight per cent from the previous. Johor residents have become more keen to becoming homeowners than prior decades, mainly due to an increase of value for money properties by reputable developers, including Bandar Seri Impian in Kluang, Johor, a township project by Matrix Concepts.

Kluang, named after the Malay word for fruit bats (keluang), was established in the early 1900s as the administrative capital to the British government. Tugged roughly 100 kilometres from capital city Johor Bahru, link roads were later built to connect the district to both south-east and south-west through Batu Bahat and Mersing. Considered the centre of Johor state, the town sits among billowy hills and streams the Mengkibol River at its heart.

Over the past four decades, development and expansion of infrastructure in Kluang has more than tripled, leading to a near two per cent growth in populace. With a steady population growth, demand on commercial and housing estates have also started to mushroom. To understand what draws investment and residents to this quaint township, one must look at the many wonders within it.

Organic farming

When Kluang was initially founded, its land was generally used for rubber plantations. Within the century, its agricultural dip has spanned into sustainable palm oil, tea and cocoa plantations. The district dappled into organic farming early on and now boasts one of the country's largest organic farming land, providing grains, common fruits and other vegetables.

Much of Kluang's economy is sustained by farming and thus eco-tourism has become popular among first-time visitors to the town. A popular visit includes the Zenxin Organic Farm, which includes a farm and convention hall tour as well as dining and shopping at its organic restaurant and supermarket. The guided tour not only includes a walk through the farmland, but visitors are highly encouraged to pick their own vegetations to compose a salad later on.

Namesake coffee

Locals call Kluang coffee the only real coffee in the world. Distinct for its unique roasting technique that finished off with globs of butter, the Kluang roast has an 80-year history with its original shop still serving customers at the Kluang Railway Station. Food offered at the coffeeshop is simplistic at best, with only local delights such as nasi lemak, charcoal grilled toasts, curry puffs and mee siam; however, the highlight, of course, is the one of a kind coffee that has been bequeath to its third generation.

In recent years, the franchise has grown outside of its township with a wider menu of food offering and a regulated powder to water ratio blend that comes out of its manufacturing plant. But to truly savour the delight of this namesake coffee, a visit to its original establishment is highly encouraged. Beyond the flavour, it is the ambiance of trains coming and leaving the station as if time was frozen just in this small little dot on the map.



Over the past four decades, development and expansion of infrastructure in Kluang has more than tripled, leading to a near two per cent growth in populace.



Image credit: holidaysinmalaysia.org

Beautiful hiking trails

Kluang is enveloped by undulating hills, making it one of the best places for a light or heavy hike. Considered one of the town's best kept secrets, Gunung Lambak is a twin peak mountain that can be seen from the town. The trail has been developed with bridges, pathways, toilets and other facilities in order to make the mountain more recreational and tourist-friendly, but do not mistaken, it is in no-way-no-how a simple summit.

Reaching 510 metres at its highest peak, the pathway ends at some point and rock scrambling with rope assistance is the only way to reach the top. Depending on the difficulty level the hiker is seeking, trails can be stretched between two and seven kilometres.

For the love of food

It wouldn't truly be a gem of Malaysia if food is not written at large. Every district, every state has its own special dish. Though seemingly similar to others within the same culture, its spice blend, cooking technique and pairing make it distinctive in and of that place. Much like the coffee brew of Kluang, some common foods are also exclusive to the district.

Giving Seremban's famous beef noodles a run for its money, praises pour in over Kluang's very own Yean Kee's beef noodles. Served both with soup or dry, the hearty and meaty accompanied broth is enjoyed with a sprinkling of chilis and a squeeze of calamansi. Yean Kee has been around for over 70 years without change.

Laksa (curry) varies from north to south, east to west. Kluang wouldn't be complete without its own adaptation of this Malaysian classic. Gerai Makan Botak serves just that — topped with honey glazed pork, cockles and fried bean curds over a bed of noodles. Of course, Hainanese chicken rice must make the list of recommended Kluang eats. Retaining much of the traditional Hainanese style of tempering the chicken until cooked, Central Restaurant is best known for its 50-year history and chili-garlic dipping sauce.



Image credit: yeekeebeefnoodles



Bandar Seri Impian

Envisioned as an urban township, Bandar Seri Impian, Kluang Southgate by Matrix Concepts lies beneath the backdrop of Gunung Lambak — complete with commercial and residential facilities for wholesome living. Spanning across 901-acre of land, the township plans to serve a community of 50,000 people.

The first phase of the fully-integrated township was announced in 2015 with 4,000 units of which has been completed and taken up. The second phase in its master plan introduces an additional 1,028 units of 2-storey terrace houses with the first batch to launch in the second quarter of 2020.

Further boosting its viability is its location. Connected to major expressways, Bandar Seri Impian is a short drive to nearby facilities, such as malls, schools, hospitals, supermarkets and KTM stations. However, attracting buyers most is its recreational park, designed pristinely to fit along the township's enclave. From tree houses, gazebos, jogging paths, sports courts and playgrounds, the neighbourhood provides endless options for a well-balanced lifestyle.



Envisioned as an urban township, Bandar Seri Impian, Kluang Southgate by Matrix Concepts lies beneath the backdrop of Gunung Lambak.



Aquatic Therapy CSR Programme by d'Tempat Country Club

25 July 2019 - All children need love, encouragement and support, and for kids with special needs, such positive reinforcement can help ensure that they emerge with self-worth, confidence and determination to keep going.

In making this a reality, d'Tempat Country Club has organised a charity programme for disabled children from Pertubuhan Pemulihan Dalam Komuniti (PDK) Kg. LBJ, Labu. The half day event, themed 'Terapi Air & Minda, saw 20 children with learning and physical disabilities heading to the swimming pool where they were given an aquatic therapy called 'Ai Chi', assisted by physiotherapists.

'Ai Chi' is a form of aquatic exercise used for recreational, fitness and physical rehabilitation. It helps to improve flexibility, build muscle strength and endurance, reduce stress and promote relaxation.

The objective of the programme is to give these special needs children a treatment to enhance their energy level, improve their nerve and motor abilities while bringing calmness to their mind.



"Most of these children suffer from various kinds of nerve and motor disabilities and this aqua therapy helps their joints and nerves to be more flexible, allowing better movements underwater. It not only helps to build up their muscles and strength but is able to bring calmness to their minds," said Laura Tan, general manager of d'Tempat Country Club.

The children and chaperons were also treated to a luncheon hosted by d'Tempat after the therapy session.



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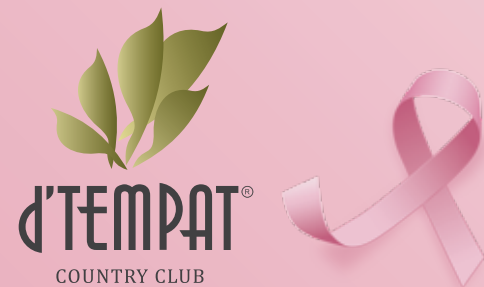
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October Pink Month At d'Tempat Country Club



19 October 2019 – Pink October is back! People across the world will mark their calendar as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. It is a worldwide annual campaign involving thousands of organisations to highlight the importance of cancer awareness, education and research.



In conjunction with this campaign, d'Tempat Country Club with National Cancer Council Malaysia (MAKNA) as strategic partners, organised October Pink Month programme that intended to educate and create awareness to the public about breast cancer and its prevention.

Filled with heaps of activities such as cancer talk, Zumba, charity sales and cooking demo, the event was officiated by Datin Norsimah, wife of Matrix Concepts' chairman. Also in attendance was Laura Tan, general manager of d'Tempat Country Club and Puan Habiba from MAKNA.

"Till now, breast cancer remains the most common cancer that affects women; therefore, we took the initiative to support this campaign by organising today's event with hope it will empower women with the knowledge on awareness and prevention," said Datin Norsimah.

Starting at 9am, the event began with pound fitness exercise and zumba. The Motovlogger, Rider Helmet Pink made a remarkable entrance with 10 lady bikers on superbikes entering the event



area as an opening gimmick.

The event continued with an awareness talk by MAKNA on breast cancer and self-examinations for prevention, followed by sharing sessions from cancer survivor Puan Norlin and cancer patient Chef Diana. The emotional moment set in when both women shared their experience after been diagnosed and the fight they had with the illness. According to them, being diagnosed with breast cancer can take life into a downward spiral but with moral support from family members, friends and communities, they gained strength to continue to live their lives to the fullest.

In promoting healthy food practices, japanese cuisine expert Chef Faiz from d'Tempat shared his forte in a sushi making demo as well as Datin Norsimah showing her culinary skills in preparing sushi to the audience.

"It will be an annual event at d'Tempat and we are looking forward to more participants from the corporate sectors, government agencies and NGO's," added Datin Norsimah at the end of the event.





Port LayPark

19 October 2019 – d'Tempat Country Club welcomed everyone to a new “lepak” place for bikers and visitors, dubbed as Port Laypark 19.10, in conjunction with its launch date on 19/10/2019.



Officiated by Ms Laura Tan, the club general manager, together with En Mohamad Rhuad, founder of Port LayPark 19.10 and En Zul Haji Rahim, Malaysia Local Route management team.

Open every weekend from Friday to Sunday, 7pm to 10.30pm, the alfresco outlet features a stall-style concept with their specialty menu of soup gearboxes and a variety of local Negeri Sembilan snacks and drinks.

“Inspired by the lenses of bikers and initiated by our d'Tempat events manager, Mohamad Rhuad, who is also a biker, Port LayPark 19.10 aims to be the weekend hangout spot to relax and unwind,” said Laura Tan, general manager of d'Tempat Country Club.

In terms of promotion, the outlet collaborated with Malaysia Local Route (MLR), a pitstop outlet entrepreneur community that was founded by a group of bikers. The collaboration will add breath to the local connection and brand positioning to resonate with motors group.





CNY Superstitions And Their Origins

From Sui to Nian, these folk tales have influenced much of the superstitions surrounding Chinese New Year that are still adopted in today's modern society.

Cue music: 'Very superstitious, writings on the wall; very superstitious, ladders bout' to fall'. In every culture and ethnic group, there are bound to be dupable beliefs of the supernatural, jinxes or hexes woven from root history to yonder years. By definition, superstition is a widely held but irrational belief in supernatural influences, especially as leading to good or bad luck. Keyword being 'irrational'. As with any belief systems, is it truly irrational or insane to do or not do something in order to attract some luck? Even if the deed is ridiculous against logic?

Superstition is ancient, dating back to the first century BC in Ancient Greece — as far as western history is concerned. Modelled and explained by poets such as Ovid and Plautus,

the art of divination scribed of a disproportionate fear or awe of the gods in mortality, henceforth leaning towards rituals or rites to reason with the divine. In any case, prevention is better than cure, even if it means having to knock on wood to avert a jinx, avoiding black cats to bypass seven years of bad luck or carrying around a rabbit's foot for wealth on a gambling deck.

The Chinese, being rich in its old wives' tales, also boast a tremendous amount of superstitions — especially during the lunar new year when the old gets dusted and put away in invitation for a new start. While most of the following can be classified as phobias or simply absurd, the Chinese and its cultural equivalent still practice these rituals in hope to preserve luck and clear out 'negative' energies that may hinder a smooth year ahead.

An ang pao for the unmarried

"Gong xi fa cai; hong bao na lai — 恭喜發財：紅包拿來." Children of Chinese descendants sing this tune the morning of the Lunar New Year. Perhaps lost to recent generation, this gratuity of handing out ang paos come from an eerie origin. Believed to have started during the Qin Dynasty around 221 BC, village elders would give children a red pouch coiled within a string of coins to ward of an evil demon that roams the streets the eve of the new year, bringing illness and untimely death to young children.

Originally called "壓歲錢 (ya sui qian)," the literal translation is 'money to suppress old age'; however, folk tales write that Sui was believed to be an evil spirit who terrorises children in their sleep. As the tale spread across the region, worried parents sought deities for protection against Sui and with it, the advice to string eight coins together wrapped in red paper and placed under the child's pillow. If Sui were to appear, a cast of light would emit, scaring off Sui and keeping the child safe from harm. Over the centuries, the meaning behind 壓歲錢 evolved from protection of the young to offering blessings (紅包).

'Nay' to black and white

Again, referring to the folk tale of Sui, red is believed to be the chosen auspicious and lucky colour, granted to the mortal realm by the deities and gods. Black, as with other cultural annotations, is the colour for funeral, while white is the colour of mourning; neither of which are ideal for ushering what is meant to be a new year of new possibilities. Beyond colour choices in garment, it is also advised that on the eve of the Lunar New Year, one should wear new pyjamas and bring in the first day with a new set of clothing.

Though not much is known of when the trend began, it is assumed that the symbolism of red = luck started with the ancient Zhou Dynasty, when the influence of heaven's will (天命 - tian ming) played a vital role in China's empirical rule. The Zhou Dynasty's overthrow of the Shang (which favoured both the colours black and white) eventually paved way for the multiple monarchs to follow, including the last imperial dynasty of China, the Great Qing (1644-1911).



Don't clean — celebrate

There once lived a creature deep in the sea named Nian (年 - year). Whence the weather was just prim for grains to grow and livestock to roam the farmland, the creature would ascend and devour to his heart's content. The villagers all lived in fear, hiding in caves and mountains — far from sight and reach of the creature, yet their plantations for the year were in deficit. One almost spring day, an elderly man walked into the village and told the villagers to remain calm. To ward off Nian, hang up lanterns, make loud noise, have a celebration so that Nian stays far away pre-harvest. So birthed the saying to Guo Nian (過年 - overcome Nian).

It is not uncommon to find Chinese households in spring cleaning mode days ahead of Chinese New Year. Partly, it is in preparation for days of celebration to Guo Nian; and also to not sweep or mop away any good luck when the god of wealth comes for a visit. While these superstitious beginnings have long been forgotten in exchange for more a more logical sense to give the homemakers a few days of rest and solitude, they are still loosely practiced as good measures.

After all, to be on the safe side...





Matrix Global Schools: Forging Its Presence In The Community



It takes a village to raise a child. This is an African proverb that means an entire community of people must interact with children for them to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment. With this in mind, MGS has opened its doors by organising two major events to include the surrounding community as part of an initiative to mark the schools' fifth year anniversary.

Matrix Global Schools Community Festival

On 22 June, the school welcomed its community of students, parents and friends to the campus for a fun-filled day of exciting events and activities, held as the school's first large-scale Open Day.

Guests of all ages and interests had the opportunity to experience the world-class facilities available in the school by participating in activities such as wall climbing, futsal, basketball, cricket, teqball and even drone flying! Little ones enjoyed arts and crafts, indoor games, jumping on a bouncing castle and participated in an English storytelling contest. There were also art exhibitions to showcase masterpieces created by the students, musical performances, food stalls and a book fair by MPH Bookstore. The event drew more than a thousand visitors and brought in new additions to the schools' enrollment.

One of the parents with three children enrolled in the MGS' International British school system, Gan Pai Ling, had this to share about the event: "The school was 'alive', with great fun and camaraderie amongst students, parents and staff, forming stronger bonds within the MGS community. Despite being a non-schooling day, learning still took place—prefects and ambassadors learnt responsibility; contest participants mastered confidence; stall/booth assistants learnt cooperation; visitors boosted support for MGS. Bravo to the management team and organising committee, and all those involved in the success of the event. Looking forward to more MGS events in the future!"

Another parent, Puan Fardzillah Abdul Manap, with two children enrolled in the private national school within the campus said: "My husband and I would like to thank the school for all your hard work and diligence in pulling together the MGS Community Festival. The event was successfully planned and executed. The live performance by students in the lobby was brilliant. It showcased some very talented students in the school and I'm proud to see my own daughter playing, knowing that she has gained the confidence to overcome her shyness to perform in public."



MGS Post UPSR Active English Camp

Apart from the festival, MGS hosted 180 students from 20 various schools around Negeri Sembilan for three days on 5, 6 and 7 November as part of the schools' effort to share the best learning practices, particularly in promoting the use of the English Language. The programme was offered at no charge and was backed by the Negeri Sembilan State Education Department (JPNS), specifically the English Language Unit, who came to view the activity as it was in line with the government's effort towards Highly Immersive Programme (HIP) in getting students to communicate in English.

"It has been a great exposure for the pupils as they got first-hand experience on learning English in such meaningful context. As I stood in the hallway, I could see their eyes beaming with exuberance and joy as they walked out of the room right after each activity. I knew that something had touched their heart and soul; not just about learning English per se but the excitement of meeting new friends in such an immersive environment where English is used immensely all the time which, I believe, given the right scaffolding and exposure, they would grow into more effective English speakers in no time.

"As for the teachers, this camp has set a benchmark of how a successful Highly Immersive Programme should be like if they were to carry out something like it. On behalf of JPNS, we would like to extend our sincere gratitude to MGS and we definitely embrace this kind of partnership. Hopefully this would be a yearly affair so that we can provide opportunities for even more schools to participate in the camp," said Puan Nor Fadhilah binti Mohd Sharif, chief assistant director of English Language Unit in Negeri Sembilan State Education Department.

Participants spent a full day with MGS faculty members who taught them that English can be taught in many fun ways, such as sports, science and the arts. They were also encouraged to use proper English apart from activity time with some nudging from the courteous and helpful MGS student helpers. One of the teachers accompanying the visiting students also made a remark about how refreshing it was for her to see the integration and cooperation among the races in the school—cementing the claim that MGS is a global campus!



Experiential Learning At Its Best: Students' Cultural Trip To Hengshui, China

At Matrix Global Schools (MGS), we pride ourselves in sending students for out-of-the-classroom learning. We understand the value of experience and giving students the opportunity to move out of their comfort zone and into the unknown. This mission was not only accomplished during our termly school field trips within the country, but also on an international scale.

From 10 to 20 July, 20 Matrix Global Schools students accompanied by three teachers proudly represented the school and country in the 7th International Culture, Education & Arts Festival at Hengshui, Hebei, China. This is the second year the school has participated in this cultural exchange programme, the first batch being fully sponsored by Matrix Concepts Holding Berhad.

Leading up to the visit, students worked and trained very hard for their performance to be presented at the festival. On 15 July, they performed the cultural Malay choral singing known as the Dikir Barat entitled 'Wau Bulan' to a full auditorium. They were able to captivate the hearts of many during the performance and planted the tune of the traditional folk song in the minds of others throughout the trip.

The programme's highlights included experiencing authentic Chinese cultural activities, visiting historical sites such as the Great Wall of China and the Forbidden City, and finally visiting the prestigious Hengshui High School to gain insights into a day in the life of a Hengshui student.

Hengshui High School is a semi-military school, which means that its students must obey a strict set of rules and regulations. There are approximately 4,000 students in the school and they study up to 15 hours a day, often seven days a week. They also have half the time for lunch than an average student enjoys at MGS. This work ethic clearly bears fruit, considering that Hengshui High School boasts the highest number of students being offered placements at high ranking universities in mainland China, as well as universities in the United Kingdom, like the prestigious Oxford University.



Letting our students see this way of schooling allowed them to reflect on their own studies, draw a comparison, and reimagine their own academic goals. We want our students to pursue excellence, but instead of just dreaming, we aim to show them what it takes to achieve it.

Year 8 student, Ee Xun, had this to say about the visit to Hengshui High School: "It was fascinating. Their teaching style was unique, a totally different experience from learning in Malaysia. We also had a glance at their sports complex; it was crowded with talented and hardworking students who put all their efforts into obtaining fame and glory for their school and country. They even achieved entry into the Olympics and fully utilised their time in order to apply their skills and effort to obtain the gold medal in the Olympics."

To top it all off, we are very proud to share that MGS students also participated in the 2nd Prominent School League's Education Forum while they were on this trip, and won the most votes for their presentation on 'Why your country should host the cultural exchange in 2020', led by two speakers, Harin Ravandran (Form 4) and Shazana Alina Sorfina (Form 2). It was an impromptu topic given to students, with limited preparation time, and MGS students took the top positions out of 15 other groups representing their countries!

The students made a lot of new friends with students from other participating countries. It was 10 days filled with bonding, sharing of stories and an eye-opening experience for everyone.

"One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things." - Henry Miller



Matrix Global Schools On Academic Rise – Awarded SKIPS 4-Star Rating

After the great achievement of surpassing the previous year's record for SPM 2018 in the national Private school, Matrix Global Schools' academic excellence continues to rise with three students achieving straight A* – A in the internationally recognised IGCSE assessment for 2018/2019.



An analysis of the IGCSE results released in August 2019 showed a significant improvement in the school's performance with 25.8% achieving 5As and above, compared to 20.9% in 2018. Further breakdown showed that apart from the top three scorers, two students attained 8As, five students attained 7As, and six students scored 6As. Overall, 71.8% of the cohort attained grade A*- C. In Matrix International School (MIS) IGCSE programme, sit is compulsory for students to sit for a minimum of seven subjects.



"We are very proud of all our students' efforts during the examination period and was able to see the fruits of their labour in the results. The results announcement was not only an opportunity to reflect on the past year's input from our students, but also the hard work and commitment from our staff. After thorough analysis, we are now ready to look to the future and focus our energies on implementing strategies to improve on these results in the coming year. We are hopeful that the 2019-2020 IGCSE cohort will make us very proud and we look forward to celebrating again this time next year," said Dornehl Kitching, acting head of MIS Secondary School.

SKIPS award for Matrix International School

Further news, Matrix International School was presented with a four-star Quality Standards for Private Educational Institutions Award by the Malaysian Ministry of Education. The review conducted in October 2018 was based on the evaluation of 15 areas set by the Ministry of Education Private Education Sector.

This is the first time that MIS has been reviewed for this award and the school is delighted to achieve a four-star standard. The faculty and students will definitely work harder to achieve the five-star excellence award in the next review.

Matrix Global Schools run both British international and private national curriculum alongside an impressive co-curricular programme to ensure a holistic education for the students in and out of the classroom. This result has proven that the teaching and learning methods practised by the schools have worked to ensure students' academic success.



Matrix Global Schools' campus principal, Loh Ghee Juan, receiving the award from the head of Private Education Sector in Negeri Sembilan State Education Department, Tuan Mohamad Nek Ezar bin Ismail.



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(Second Row, Seven from Left) A group photo of Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman Matrix Concepts & his wife, Datin Yong Chou Lian, with the NSBA team.

NS Matrix 4-Peat Champion

1 September 2019 – Once again, Negeri Sembilan Basketball Association (NSBA) has successfully secured their fourth Agong Cup Men's and Women's Championship, defeating Segamat B.A 76 – 43 for the Women's Division while the Men's Division defeating Westport Dragons 77 – 53 in an epic game of basketball.

A total of 14 teams who dribbled it out at the MABA Stadium from 26 August – 1 September 2019 were Negeri Sembilan, NS Matrix, Perak, Armed Forces, Westports Malaysia Dragons, Firehorse, Knight Fury, Sam Tiong Kenog Youth, Speed Hunters, Penang Horng Tat Motorpart, Segamat BA, Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, and Stallions.

Head Coach Brian Joseph Lester commented: "This is where our team gets serious and the quality of actions go up a level. No doubt that this has certainly become a catalyst in working hard and resulting in winning the championship. With stiff competitions, this is to make sure that our teams are ready to play at a high level of basketball for the Philippines SEA Games in Manila on December 2019."

"The 61st MABA/Matrix Agong Cup National Basketball Championship 2019 is undoubtedly the perfect symbol of national unity through sports. The philosophy to focus on raising the country's profile in sports, both nationally and globally, is motivated by the need to regain past glories in basketball, football, and badminton, to name a few. Congratulations to NSBA team for this winning again," said Dato' Lee Tian Hock, group executive deputy chairman of Matrix Concepts.

Dato' Lee Tian Hock was present during the opening ceremony of MABA Agong Cup on 25 August 2019, together with the presence of Datuk Sri Mohamad Norza Zakaria, president



of Olympic Council Malaysia. The basketball team marched into the hall during the opening ceremony performance by the Matrix Global Schools (MGS) students band, Crimson Cadance, to the Eye of the Tiger. The band consisted of members Darren Voo, Christopher Lee Yeong Soom, Puteri Nurliyana Syamimi, Chung Kai Hong, Rania Syarina and Ng Ryu Shen.

A Dikir Barat performance from MGS students, Harin Ravandaran, shared his experience by saying: "We had butterflies in our stomachs as we walked into the MABA stadium. But this did not stop us from doing our best and giving the spectators a good Dikir Barat show! We should always strive to give our best so we can show the world that MGS is Nulli Secunda – Second to None!"

MGS finished off strong with another song from the band. They sang the hit song by local indie band Bunkface called 'Malam ini Kita Punya' (The Night is Ours) while engaging with the crowd like seasoned professional performers. The performance moved many people, inspiring them to leave comments and messages of praise about the band on MABA's social media page.

"We had an amazing experience, performing for our first huge public audience. LIVE! This experience has brought us all closer as a band, as well as taught us a few things about managing professional performances. We look forward to representing Matrix Global Schools in upcoming events, to show that we are truly Nulli Secunda" said Chung Kai Hong, the drummer cum band leader of Crimson Cadence.



Tight game during the Semi-Final vs Westport Dragon.



Both teams of Negeri Sembilan and NS Matrix shake hands before the game starts.



To 'Higher Year' With Glutinous Nian Gao

Symbolism is the credence that guides the dining table spread during Chinese New Year, with Nian Gao being a specialty during the festivities.

Made simply with a handful of ingredients, the 'nian gao' (年糕) is a must-have dessert during Chinese New Year celebration. Though it can be enjoyed at any time, it is mainly eaten during the holiday for its auspicious well meaning. In Chinese, 'nian' for sticky has the same intonation as the 'nian' for year and 'gao' for cake sounds similar to the 'gao' that means higher. It is common for households to give Nian Gao (or rather rice cake) as gifts as it symbolises for 'one to achieve greater growth in the coming year'.

While the rice cake was first developed in China, the practice of gifting and enjoying it with the family during Chinese New Year has spread across many continents. Influences of varying Chinese ancestral cultures have changed the preparation and flavour of it slightly, but the base has remained the same since its origin. Throughout the years with modern mass production, the nian gao's standard circle or square shape have gained new moulds in order to add on more auspicious symbolism, such as the carp and ingot, in order to make it more marketable to the new generation.

In Malaysia, nian gao is traditionally enjoyed pan-seared or fried sandwiched between two slices of taro or sweet potato in an egg coating. But there are more than one way to enjoy this glutinous and rich dessert that stems from other regions.

A savoury hint

Much like the Malaysian version of deep frying the rice cake between two slices of taro or potato, switch it up with lotus root. Lotus root is slightly less starchy than potatoes and has a higher nutritional count. Its' dietary fibre count also beats out taro and potatoes due to it being a water plant. Because of its complex structure, the lotus root has a longer cooking time than other root starches, giving it a unique crunch. Coat with a mixture of corn flour and plain flour rather than an egg bath before frying.

Literal sandwich

Due to its sweetness, nian gao is the perfect drape of stickiness to pair with a batch of French toast. Lightly beat four large eggs together with a pinch of salt. Soak any bread of your choice in the egg bath and pan fry in butter. Layer on a slice of rice cake and an additional egg-soaked slice of bread. Flip and fry until the other side is golden brown. Add a drizzle of maple syrup and glob of butter to enjoy it Western-style.

Crunchy goodness

For all those who goes a little nut for nuts. Slice the rice cake into thumb-size strips and roll the glutinous treat in a mixture of crushed nuts and sugar. The nuts of choice can range from almonds to pecans, but most commonly will be a blend of crushed peanuts and sesame seeds. No steaming, no oil, no frying; serve just as for a stretchy, sticky treat everyone can fall in love with.



Image credit: bonchan @ detikcom

Simple Nian Gao

RECIPE

Ingredients (yields 4 servings, one 10cm cake pan)

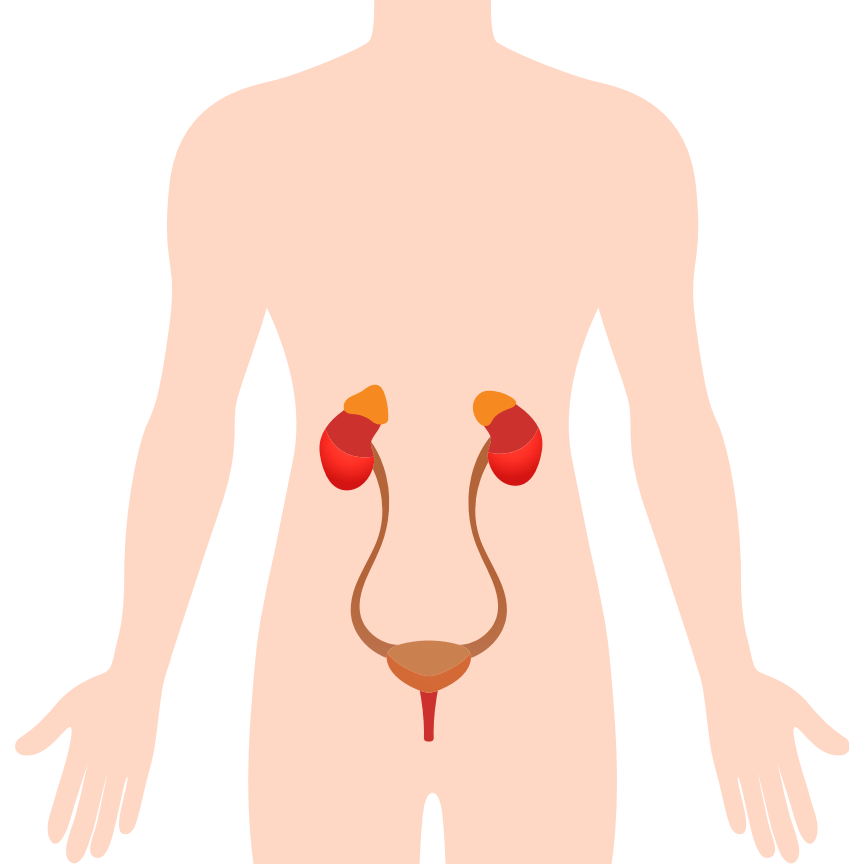
- 440g Glutinous Rice Flour
- 600g Sugar
- 440g Distilled Water

Method

Sift the flour into a large bowl and add water to create a smooth batter. Add sugar and mix thoroughly until the sugar is well dissolved. Let the batter sit for 20 minutes. Line the container with a light spread of vegetable oil and pour the batter in, tapping it on a countertop a few times to release the air bubbles. Place a damp cloth over the top of the container and put into steamer to steam for 10-12 hours. After steaming, remove the container and let the rice cake set for up to three days before use.

Note: Do not be discouraged by the long cooking time. This method of caramelising the rice cake is the most traditional format and allows the sugar to fully develop without first being cooked over stove top, which can cause uneven distribution of the sugar mixture. With all the symbolism of the nian gao, it is deserving of a little time, affection and labour of love.





Take Care Of Your Kidneys, And Your Kidneys Will Take Care Of You

By: Dr. Dheepa Ramasamy, Mawar Medical Centre

Over 850 million people worldwide are estimated to have kidney disease from various causes. Chronic kidney disease (CKD) is now the sixth fastest growing cause of death, and contributes to at least 2.4 million deaths per year.

In Malaysia, the prevalence of CKD has increased from 9.1% in the 2011 National Health and Morbidity survey to 15.5% in 2018. The number of patients with kidney failure requiring dialysis therapy is also rising at an alarming rate. Right now, there are more than 40,000 Malaysians on dialysis with approximately 7,000 new patients every year.

CKD is marked by long term, irreversible loss of kidney function. The effects of this malfunction are changes in the body's chemical balance, the disruption of essential body processes, and the build-up of waste products in the blood. There are five clinical stages of CKD; most patients in earlier stages will feel quite normal, and exhibit signs and symptoms of the disease only in later stages. End stage kidney disease (ESKD) is when the kidney function is no longer sufficient to sustain life, and some form of kidney replacement

therapy is necessary- either dialysis or kidney transplant. Patients on dialysis very often have a reduced quality of life with various lifestyle restrictions, and may experience feelings of anger, anxiety, hopelessness or depression. There is a significant physical, emotional, financial, and social burden on the patients as well as their loved ones.

Whilst there is no cure for CKD, the disease is preventable and treatable, and most importantly the progression can be retarded or halted. Knowing what actually causes CKD will help us identify ways to protect our kidneys and prevent the disease. Those at highest risk of developing CKD are patients with diabetes mellitus, hypertension, age > 65 years, obesity, heart disease, family history of kidney disease and excessive usage of certain drugs such as analgesics/ proton pump inhibitors. Diabetes is the



leading cause of chronic kidney disease in our country, i.e. 65% of new dialysis patients have diabetes as the primary cause of kidney failure. Other causes of kidney disease include chronic glomerulonephritis (inflammation within the kidneys), autoimmune diseases such as lupus, kidney stones or prostate disease, and genetic diseases such as adult polycystic kidney disease. Of late, there is an increasing number of patients with kidney damage caused by unchecked consumption of traditional medications/herbs and unapproved health supplements, and this is a practice that is much frowned upon by health care professionals.

People with CKD, especially in the early stages, may not feel or notice any symptoms. The only way to find out if an individual has CKD is by conducting specific blood and urine tests. These include a blood test to measure the level of serum creatinine, as well as a urine test to look for the presence of protein and/or blood. If one has diabetes mellitus, hypertension, heart disease or a positive family history of kidney disease, it is crucial to get screened for kidney disease. This can be done at any medical facility in the country, including the health clinics and hospitals. It would be best to be seen by a qualified medical doctor who can review these results and refer to a nephrologist if indicated. The sooner it is detected, the better, for measures can be taken to retard or halt the progression of disease, and this will lead to a more favourable outcome.

When our kidneys are healthy, urine produced will be of normal colour and character. Normal urine is clear, with a yellowish hue, and does not contain blood or foam. Foam in urine is white and remains in the toilet despite flushing. This indicates the presence of protein in the urine or proteinuria, which is a marker of kidney disease. This is an important symptom that should never be ignored, especially if there are accompanying symptoms such as swelling of the legs and around the eyes. A simple urine test can confirm the presence of protein and further tests will be conducted to determine the cause of this condition.

So, the most important question would be – How do we prevent CKD and keep our kidneys healthy? If an individual is diabetic or has high blood pressure, keeping the sugar and blood pressure readings to target is mandatory to prevent damage to the kidneys. Close monitoring by a medical doctor with regular blood and urine tests are required to pick up early signs of kidney disease. Certain medications such as renin-angiotensin-aldosterone system (RAAS) blockers may be prescribed to help protect kidney function in this group of patients.

A healthy lifestyle is the cornerstone in preventing kidney disease amongst the general population. Anyone who smokes should stop smoking for this practice is proven to be harmful to the kidneys. Obesity is also linked to proteinuria and CKD; hence a normal body mass index is recommended and to achieve this, one must exercise regularly and adhere to healthy, clean eating habits. Stay away from processed junk, and stick to natural, wholesome foods which contain all the nutrients we require. There is no need for expensive health supplements as all necessary vitamins and minerals can be obtained from natural food sources. Drink enough plain water to stay well hydrated and avoid sugary sweet drinks that contain empty calories. Limit alcohol intake, get enough sleep and take appropriate steps to reduce stress and achieve a healthy work-life balance.

In general, it is not at all difficult to take good care of our kidneys. They are the second smartest organs in our body (after the brain), so they know exactly what to do to keep things working right. We just need to treat them with the respect they deserve, and they will serve us well, taking care of our needs for as long as we live.





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