

## Office Space for Rent – WISMA BIM



21,100 sq ft of office space available for rent.

Floor	Sq ft	Rental Rate (Negotiable)
1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	5,123	RM10,000.00
2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	5,328	RM9,000.00
3 <sup>rd</sup> Floor	5,328	RM8,000.00
4 <sup>th</sup> Floor	5,328	RM7,000.00

\* Private Lift (if rented en-bloc)  
Interested tenants kindly call Cik Nurul at:  
*Secretariat Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia,  
Bangunan BIM,  
51B Jalan SS21/56B,  
Damansara Utama, 47400 PETALING JAYA  
Tel : 03-7728 7171/03-77294621  
Fax : 03-7727 7354  
Email : [nurul@bim.org.my](mailto:nurul@bim.org.my)*



- Public transport: Rapid KL Bus, LRT, Taxi
- Food court
- Convenient Store
- Parking space

## Office Space For Rent

**Address:**  
Wisma BIM, No.1 Jalan Tasik Permaisuri 2,  
Bandar Tun Razak,  
Cheras, Kuala Lumpur

30 APRIL 2018

## Office Space for Rent – WISMA ZELAN



# Wisma Zelan



- Public transport: Rapid KL Bus, LRT, Taxi
- Food court
- Convenient Store
- Parking space

Suite	Sq ft	Rental Rate
10.03	861	RM1,200.00
10.03A	958	RM1,300.00
10.05	958	RM1,300.00
10.06	861	RM1,200.00
10.07 & 10.08 (combined unit)	2928	RM4,000.00

## Office Space For Rent

**Address:**  
10<sup>th</sup> Floor, Wisma Zelan,  
No.1 Jalan Tasik  
Permaisuri 2, Bandar Tun  
Razak, Cheras, Kuala  
Lumpur

Interested tenants kindly call Cik Nurul at:  
Secretariat  
Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia,  
Bangunan BIM, 51B Jalan SS21/56B,  
Damansara Utama, 47400 PETALING JAYA  
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Fax : 03-7727 7354  
Email : [nurul@bim.org.my](mailto:nurul@bim.org.my)



30 APRIL 2018

## Office Space for Rent – Multi Purpose Hall



**Area** : 6000 Sq ft (Approx)  
**Rental** : RM1,200 per day

- Air Conditioned (5 units)
- Capacity
- ❖ 300 pax (Round Tables)
- ❖ 500pax (Theatre)
- Next to Lumayan Apartment
- Opposite Tasik Permaisuri
- Nearby Housing Area: Bandar Sri Permaisuri, Taman Jaya, Taman Mulia

Interested tenants kindly call Cik Nurul at:  
Secretariat

Balai Ikhtisas Malaysia, Bangunan BIM, 51B Jalan SS21/56B,  
Damansara Utama, 47400 PETALING JAYA  
Tel : 03-7728 7171/03-77294621  
Fax : 03-7727 7354  
Email : [nurul@bim.org.my](mailto:nurul@bim.org.my)



- Suitable for
- ✓ Wedding reception
- ✓ Exhibition
- ✓ Other formal events.
- Parking space

## Multi Purpose Hall For Rent

### Address:

No.1 Jalan Tasik  
Permaisuri 2,  
Bandar Tun Razak,  
Cheras, Kuala Lumpur

## ABOUT MEMBERS

### **MPS: GOVERNMENT MUST EMPOWER PHARMACISTS FOR NATIONAL HEALTHCARE**



As our nation goes into its 14<sup>th</sup> general election, the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society (MPS) would like to highlight areas to which the government needs to give urgent and immediate attention; issues of patient rights, patient safety, financial sustainability and equitable provision of health.

The MPS is the national association for pharmacists in Malaysia, representing the interests of pharmacists and the public in the area of pharmaceuticals and health. As a non-profit organization, our goal is a progression of pharmacy practice which would benefit public health outcomes, hence our motto: "*Berkhidmat Untuk Kesihatan Rakyat*".

Pharmacy has been identified a critical profession in the government's healthcare transformation. There are now 16,000 pharmacists receiving advanced pharmacy education and training that subscribes to international standards. Compulsory service for pharmacists has contributed significantly to professional competency and strengthened the public and private service sectors.

The Government continues to be concerned over the impact of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) on the health of the nation and the escalating costs of treatment; as well as the increasing complexity on medicines on medicine safety.

Pharmacists in both public and private sectors can make a big difference if they are given greater recognition as a healthcare profession and more opportunities to influencing policies affecting public health.

**30 APRIL 2018**

If pharmacists are given a more responsible role in the primary care setting, together with the separation of dispensing as part of professional medicine management ensuring safety—a role which they are professionally trained to perform—we believe the people can enjoy better health benefits.

MPS, in supporting the above pillar of the healthcare system, would like to request that the current or future government undertake seriously the following in the near future:

1. *Recognize pharmacists as the custodians of medicines* via the acceptance of separation of dispensing from prescribing in the private primary care sector.
2. *Ensure that the quality of pharmacists being produced is at the highest level.* To enable effective training of graduate pharmacists, a moratorium of pharmacy courses with a specific term and criteria must be put in place.
3. *Make mandatory the issuance of prescriptions by healthcare providers.* This is to ensure consumers' and patients' protection through access to legal documents such as prescriptions. Furthermore, health data should be the property of the patient, with hospitals and clinics acting only as guardians thereof.
4. *To make all medicines non-taxable (zero-rated GST).*
5. *Involve the citizens and civil society organizations* in policy making and legislative drafting processes, as well as increase their capacity in decision-making.
6. *Be impartial towards all professional organizations* and consider all views in a fair and transparent manner.
7. *Review the health system and work collaboratively towards a financially sustainable system* that is fair and just to patients, consumers and all health professionals, which is equitable and affordable to all citizens.

The MPS strongly believes that if all the above are met, the Malaysian healthcare system will be considered world class; to be emulated by others.

This article is derived from an official press release by the Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society.

30 APRIL 2018

## MALAYSIAN INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTS OFFICE BEARERS 2018-2019

The members of PAM Council 2018-2019, duly elected and announced at the 52nd PAM AGM on 21st April 2018:

President	Ar Ezumi Harzani Ismail
Deputy President	Ar Sarly Adre Sarkum
Vice President	Ar Lillian Tay
Honorary Secretary	Ar Erdayu Os'hara Omar
Honorary Treasurer	Ar Alvin Lim Hai Seah
Ordinary Council Member	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Ar Abu Zarim Abu Bakar</li><li>•Ar Ang Chee Cheong</li><li>•Ar Mike Boon Chee Khian</li><li>•Ar Chong Lee Siong</li><li>•Ar Dexter Koh Yew Peng</li><li>•Ar Alice Leong Pek Lian</li><li>•Ar Menaha Ramanath</li><li>•Ar Norzakiah Arshad</li><li>•Datuk Ar Sundra Rajoo a/l Nadarajah</li><li>•Ar Steven Thang Boon</li><li>•An Ar Thirilogachandran a/l Shanmugasundaram</li><li>•Ar Wan Sofiah Wan Ishak</li><li>•Dato' Ar Zulhairi Md Zain</li></ul>
Representative	<p><i>Northern Chapter</i> Ar Loh Chiak Eong</p> <p><i>Southern Chapter</i> Ar Hazri Abdul Aziz</p> <p><i>Sabah Chapter</i> Ar Arnold Kwan Chee Hung</p> <p><i>Sarawak Chapter</i> Ar Bong Joon Hin</p>

30 APRIL 2018

“WORLD VETERINAR DAY 2018”

28 – 29 APRIL 2018

Ladang Infoternak Sg. Siput (U), Perak



**HARI VETERINAR  
SEDUNIA 2018**  
ANURAN JABATAN PERKHIDMATAN VETERINAR MALAYSIA & NEGERI PERAK

**28-29 APRIL 2018  
LADANG INFOTERNAK  
SG. SIPUT (U), PERAK**

Acara-acara menarik menanti anda :

- Pameran Drp. JPV, Perhilitan, UPM, UMK
- Pameran Ternakan Hidup
- Klinik Veterinar Bergerak
- Jualan Promosi
- Pertandingan Memancing
- Peraduan Mewarna
- Zumba
- Petting Zoo
- Fun Cat Show
- Vet Fun Run

Pertanyaan :  
En. Abdul Hanit  
(013-584 5429)  
Pn. Nur Iqhwaniah  
(017-958 8527)22



**LAMAN TERNAKAN**  
PAMERAN TERNAKAN & PETTING ZOO  
SEMPENA HARI VETERINAR SEDUNIA 2018

**SEMUA  
DIEMPAK  
HADIR!!!**

Ladang Infoternak  
Sg. Siput (U) Perak  
28 & 29 April 2018  
10.00 Pagi - 6.30  
Petang

**Aktiviti :**

**Pameran Ternakan**

- 1) Ruminan Besar :  
Lembu Sado
- 2) Ruminan Kecil :  
Kambing Baka Unggul

**Petting Zoo**

- 1) Interaksi Bersama Arnab
- 2) Pameran Icon Negeri Perak Rusa Timorensis
- 3) Teka Berat Telur Ostrich

World Veterinar Day is celebrated every third Saturday in April each year.

2018 in conjunction with upholding the World Veterinary Day veterinary service will be celebrated at the Sg. Infoternak Farm. Silver Snail (U) on April 28 to 29. Various exciting activities await you!



30 APRIL 2018

## RISM CHARITY RUN 2018

6 May 2018  
7.00 am to 12.00 pm  
Tasik Taman Jaya, Petaling Jaya



The poster features a central image of runners in motion, overlaid with a circular graphic of two runners. The Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia logo is positioned at the top center, with the website [www.rism.org.my](http://www.rism.org.my) below it. A red banner in the top right corner reads "OPEN to public". The main title "RISM CHARITY RUN 2018" is prominently displayed in the center. The bottom left section, set against a blue background, provides event details: Date: 6 May 2018, Venue: Tasik Taman Jaya (Open Car Park), Petaling Jaya, Time: 7.00 am to 12.00 pm (To assemble at 6.30 am), and Distance: 5km and 10km. The bottom right corner includes the text "ONLINE REGISTRATION: [raceasia.com](http://raceasia.com)".

RISM will be organizing the 2nd RISM Charity Run 2018 on 06th May 2018. The expected number of participants for this Charity Run is about 1,000 to 1,500.

The funds raised to be donated to charity organisations which are Yayasan Raja Muda Selangor, Ti-Ratana Welfare Society and Kiwanis Down Syndrome Foundation. The start/end point of the Charity Run will be at the Parking Lot of Taman Jaya and the categories of run to be divided into the distances of 5km and 10km.



## GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

### OF SEX POSITIONS, FOOD AND GETTING PREGNANT

The Star, 30 March 2018

**PETALING JAYA:** When couples decide to start trying for a baby, it's hard to distinguish between old wives' tales and what really works to increase the chances of pregnancy.

However, doctors say the only way to truly increase chances of getting pregnant is by being aware of the woman's ovulation period.

That doesn't stop myths – even those claiming to be able to promote chances of getting a baby of a certain gender – from circulating, especially in the age of the Internet.



Dr Agilan: 'Sperms are pre-programmed to swim forward, no matter what.'

#### **Myth no 1: Couples need to feel relaxed during intercourse**

Fertility specialist Dr Wong Pak Seng said one of the major myths is that the couple needs to feel relaxed during intercourse, lest their stress contribute to infertility.

"However, stress can affect fertility in the sense that it not only causes the woman's period to become unpredictable, the stress can reduce libido so they're not together often enough," he said.

#### **Myth no 2: Orgasms increase chances of conception**

He also debunked the notion that having orgasms would increase the chances of getting pregnant.

"An orgasm is basically a series of rhythmic contractions affecting the muscles, the pelvis and the uterus.

“People believe that these contractions can propel the sperm nearer to the egg, but this is just a misconception,” he said.

### **Myth no 3: If a woman gets up after having sex, sperm will flow out**

Fertility specialist Dr Agilan Arjunan dismissed old wives’ tales that elevating a woman’s hips or lifting her legs would help the sperm along to find the egg in the fallopian tube.

“Sperms are pre-programmed to swim forward, no matter what,” he said, adding that getting up after sex won’t diminish a couple’s chances of getting pregnant.

“When couples see fluid coming out after intercourse, it is actually a mixture of sperm fluid, the semen and the vaginal fluid.

“Of course, there will be some sperm in the fluid, but most of the good sperm will find their way up.”

### **Myth no 4: Sex positions matter**

Dr Wong explained that the vagina is a blind-ending pouch and once the sperm is in the pouch, the sperm can swim up to the fallopian tube, whatever the sex position is.

“Also, if you have a retroverted uterus, there’s no need to employ the rear entry position. In fact, it’s actually counterproductive, because in that position, the semen flows out even faster, so position doesn’t play a role in increasing the chances of conception,” said Dr Wong.

### **Myth no 4: Type of foods affect fertility**

Dr Wong also dismissed the traditional practice of consuming the male organs of animals to enhance a man’s fertility.

“If you already have normal levels of the male hormone testosterone, and you consume some more, the brain will perceive there is too much and it will try to suppress the testosterone, at the same time suppressing sperm production,” he said.

He explained that this is because the body’s feedback system would decrease the production of testosterone when it detects there is a rise above the normal levels of the hormone.

### **Myth no 5: The occurrence of ejaculation means there is sperm**

“Another myth is that as long as the male partner ejaculates, he can get somebody pregnant,” said Dr Agilan.

“What they see when they ejaculate is only the semen. They don’t even know if the semen contains sperm or not.”

### **Myth no 6: Male sperm prefer an alkaline environment**

Dr Wong said there are those who mistakenly believe that male sperm prefer an alkaline environment.

“They think that if you want to promote your chances of having a baby boy, they take more alkaline-type of foods, like meat, cranberry juice or barley water.

“Some women even go to the extent of douching their vagina with some alkaline solution to promote the chances of getting a baby boy,” he said.

Dr Agilan shared that some have the misconception that sperm bearing the Y chromosome is lighter and swims faster than those bearing the X chromosome.

“People mistakenly believe that if you have sex earlier in your fertile period, the male sperm will be the ones who reach the egg first,” he noted.

Conversely, he added, those trying to get a baby girl would wait till the latter part of their ovulation to have intercourse so that the “female” sperm can stand an equal chance to reach the eggs.

“That’s not true as female sperm can also swim fast,” he said, adding that the chances of conceiving either a male or female baby is generally about 50-50 and is completely random.

## PROTECT THOSE PEARLY WHITES

The Star, 3 April 2018



### Protect those pearly whites

Star2 3 Apr 2018

THE most visible yet often neglected part of your body is your mouth, or more specifi-

cally, your teeth. Having a set of shiny, white teeth can not only help boost your confidence by

making you more attractive but contributes to your overall health as well.

Dentistry is a fulfilling field that helps people achieve their optimum dental health. Professions in this field are largely associated with dental care but can also include cosmetic dental treatment.

This dynamic field has a

specialisations you can choose from include:

● **Periodontology** – Involves

▼ **Joint community health centres** – If you want to give back to society, this option is

has produced less-than-promising findings in terms of dental health literacy among Malaysians. Some

preventing the survey. However, only 26.6% of this group sought treatment

ratio of 1:5,000 this year, it is a good time to begin your dentistry journey.



wide array of specialisations. A traditional path will bring you towards owning a dental care practice while more modern specialisations are focused on research or cosmetic alterations.

#### Local need for dentists

Dentistry is not as simple as teaching people how to brush and floss. Oral disease due to poor dental care is rampant, ranging from tooth decay and gum disease to cavities. Early detection is extremely important since minor symptoms such as an oral ulcer can indicate more serious conditions.

“Maintaining good oral health is more than just brushing your teeth. Educating people on oral health is crucial for

society to maintain overall health and quality of life,” says paediatric dental specialist Dr Leong Kei Joe, who is also president-elect of the Malaysian Dental Association.

#### The pathway to dentistry

Many people carry the misconception that dentistry is an easier field of study than other medical professions. This is an unrealistic perception since dentistry is appropriately complex and challenging.

In Malaysia, pursuing dentistry takes at least five years of intensive education followed by a year of compulsory service with the Government. After that, you can choose to specialise. The process of specialisation usually takes three years.

Specialisations you can choose from include:

**Periodontology** dealing with diseases of the gums and supporting structures of the mouth and jaws.

**Orthodontics** – Includes diagnosing and correcting misalignment of the jaws and teeth.

**Prosthodontics** – Focuses on recreating and restoring parts of the teeth or jaws damaged in accidents or by disease.

**Paediatric dentistry** – Dedicated to the oral health needs of babies and children, who have different dental anatomy from adults.

**Cosmetic dentistry** – Aesthetic appearance is the heart of this line, with focus on obtaining skills in correcting and restoring teeth, jaws and other oral structures.

**Veterinary dentistry** – A relatively rare field of dentistry for care of animals such as race horses whose dentists are called equine dental technicians.

**Forensic odontology** – Involves criminal investigation such as identification of disfigured victims through dental records.

#### Career options

Even though the general assumption is that you will be a dentist upon completing your dentistry degree, there are other career options available as follows:

**Own practice** – The most common career option in the field, having your own practice means you get to be your own





boss and determine your own working hours.

You can be a general dental practitioner or specialise as a dental surgeon, or both.

Join hospitals – Getting a hospital job means you can work at an established institution with an existing clientele and consistent salary.

Being attached to a hospital also means busy days, especially if working at a government hospital.

Join community health centres – If you want to give back to society, this option is for you.

While fresh graduates may be reluctant to work for little to no pay at these centres, some senior dentists are usually happy to contribute their time and skill due to their more flexible schedules.

Teaching – Another profession for more senior dentists, being an industry expert qualifies you to impart knowledge to students. Most teaching positions require several years as a dentist or in associated specialisations.

Research – If your focus is on bettering the field of dentistry by developing new techniques in treatment and prevention procedures, a career in research may be for you.

To conduct research projects and studies, you usually need several years under your belt as a dental health practitioner.

### Skills needed to succeed

Every profession needs people who are not only passionate about their work but also pos-

sess certain personality attributes that suit the demands of that career. The attributes needed for pursuing dentistry are:

Love for science – Science forms the basic and future development of dentistry. Having a keen interest in science subjects can make your journey in dentistry an enjoyable one.

Love for people – Dentists deal with many people daily. Even if you want to teach or be a researcher in the field, you need a few years as a practitioner to qualify for those positions.

A genuine care for people and good social skills are needed by any dentist, especially for one wanting to specialise in paediatric dentistry.

Hard-working – As with

many other professions, being a hard worker is necessary to pursue a career in dentistry.

Completing your education is not the end of your hard work as you then need to get used to working in the highly competitive field.

Write a comment...



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Comment



Save



More



Bump it



Dump it

## DISEASES THAT FEED SILENT STROKE

The Star, 17 April 2018



### Diseases that feed silent stroke

Star2 17 Apr 2018



**MRI brain scans of a normal healthy individual and hypertensive and diabetic individual. The latter has white spots in the brain scan, indicating damaged brain cells (experienced a silent stroke).**

ONE in four people over the age of 80 have experienced one or more cases of silent stroke.

It is a phenomenon that occurs with age, but common among smokers and people with high blood pressure or diabetes.

Start

It does not appear with common signs of a stroke such as sudden headaches, dizziness and loss of motor skills.

Without signs and symptoms, a silent stroke may look harmless from the surface but deep within, it damages your brain cells and increases your risk of getting major stroke and dementia or Alzheimer's disease.

Brain cell damages can be detected through MRI brain scan in the form of patches of white spots in the brain, known as White Matter Lesion (WML).

More WML indicates more damaged brain cells and as this continues, the brain will start to lose its functions, leading to increased incidences of dementia, Alzheimer's and major stroke.

Four out of five people with diabetes and hypertension are affected by silent stroke.

Silent strokes are common in people with high blood pressure and diabetes.

Studies from Japan found people with high blood pressure have 58% chance of getting silent stroke while for those with diabetes and hypertension, the chance of silent stroke dramatically increases to 82%.

(1)

A stroke research study conducted among Malaysians in 2000 to 2014 showed hypertension as the most common risk factor for stroke, accounting for 76.1%, followed by 55.2% for diabetes mellitus.

This means that Malaysians are highly vulnerable to the damages of silent stroke.

Start protecting your brain cells early if you have high blood pressure and diabetes

Palm tocotrienols, a unique extract from red palm oil, was researched and found capable of protecting brain cells (neuroprotection).

Published in the Journal of Stroke 2014, a study was conducted on 121 volunteers with cardiovascular risk factors and brain cells damages.

They were given either 200mg of palm tocotrienols with Suprabio formulation or placebo pills (softgels with edible oil) twice a day for a span of two years.

(2)

Results showed that the damages found in the brain tissue of those who had consumed the placebo worsened after one

year and further deteriorated after the second year.

However, the brain tissue for those who had taken palm tocotrienols remained unchanged.

The study concluded that consuming 200mg of palm tocotrienols with Suprabio formulation twice a day could protect brain cells from further damages.

The Suprabio formulation is critical to help deliver the tocotrienols into the brain for protection as the enhanced technology helps increase the absorption of tocotrienols up to 300%.

Without it, formulation of normal mixed palm tocotrienols may not reach the brain cells for protection.

Hence, taking 200mg of

palm tocotrienols twice a day with the formulation helps protect brain cells and slows the formation of WML, which reduces the risks of getting major stroke, dementia and Alzheimer's disease.

Palm tocotrienols can be used as a long-term health supplement for the brain as a preventive measure against various neurodegenerative disorders.

They are natural vitamins that are safe for long-term consumption.


#### References

Eguchi, K. Stroke: Journal of (1) the American Heart Association, Sept. 19, 2003; rapid access issue. News release, American Heart Association.

Gopalan.Y. et al. Clinical (2)

Investigation of the Protective Effects of Palm Vitamin E Tocotrienols on Brain White Matter. Stroke. 2014; 45:00-00.

■ For details, call 03-7831 2738 (weekdays from 9am to 4pm).

 Write a comment...



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Comment



Save



More



Bump it (1)



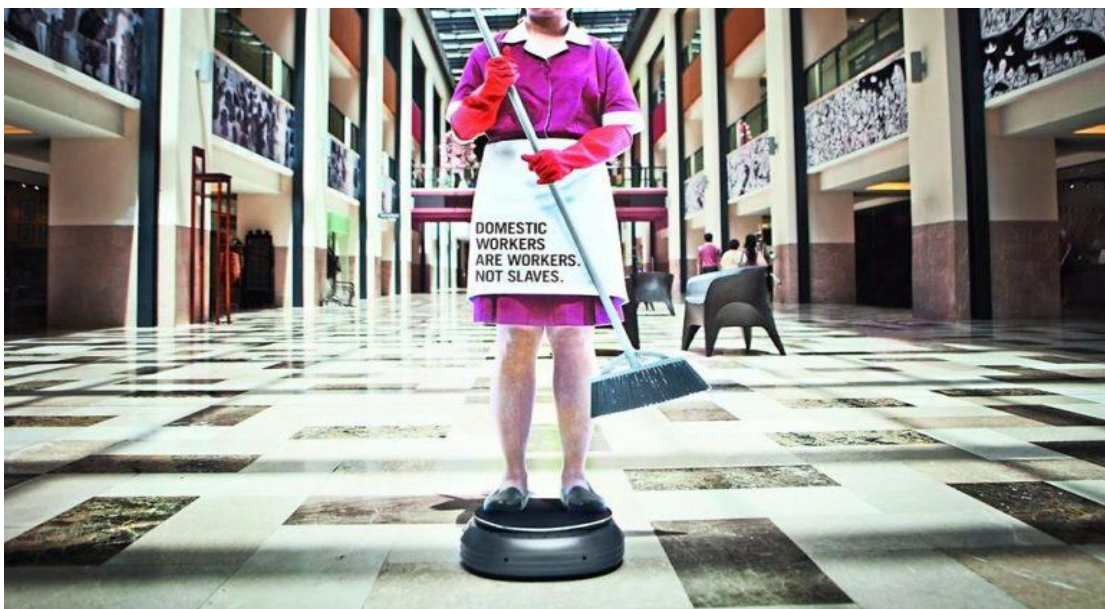
Dump it



## CURRENT UPDATES

### DOMESTIC WORKERS CONTINUE TO BE ABUSED UNTIL TOUGHER LAWS CAN PROTECT THEM

The Star, 6 April 2018



A display used in "Domestic Workers, Not Slaves" public awareness campaign, organised by advertising agency McCann Kuala Lumpur in collaboration with Tenaganita, held in 2012 at a mall in Kuala Lumpur.

They are the first ones to wake up in the household and often, the last to go to bed. In between, they slave it out – cooking, cleaning, taking care of children and the elderly, grooming and walking pets, washing cars, gardening and attending to all other needs of the household.

These are the daily tasks of most domestic workers. They work hard and they work long, yet are disqualified from basic protections that workers enjoy: fixed working hours, leave days, medical coverage or even fair wages.

This lack of legal protection leaves domestic workers with virtually no rights; vulnerable to exploitation and abuse which human rights activists want the government to address immediately.

Failure to do this is likely to result in more fatalities. In January, Indonesian domestic worker Adelina Lisao died in Bukit Mertajam, Penang. Lisao is just one in a long list of domestic workers who have suffered at the hands of abusive employers.



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“The main reason that abuse of domestic workers is so prevalent is the lack of legal protection for them. The Employment Act 1955, which purportedly protects the rights of domestic workers, doesn’t even recognise them as workers. They are classified as servants, maids and helpers and are excluded from key protections granted under the law for other workers.

“On top of that, their place of work – their employer’s home – is a private domain, hidden from public scrutiny or inspection by labour officers. Isolated and hidden, employers – not all, but many – feel they can exploit and subject their domestic workers to sustained abuse and torture, and get away with it. Sometimes this ends tragically in death, like it did for Adelina,” says executive director of Tenaganita, Glorene Dass.



Dass: “The main reason that abuse of domestic workers is so prevalent is the lack of legal protection for them.”

Lisao, 26, was abused by her employers within the confines of their home in Bukit Mertajam, Penang. When she was rescued she was lying on the porch with the family dog and she bore septic wounds on her body. A day later, she died of multiple organ failure.

“This isn’t an [isolated case](#). It was highlighted because the media was present when Adelina was rescued, but there are many cases that go unreported,” asserts Dass.

From June to December last year, Tenaganita handled 120 cases of abuse among domestic workers, of which 82 were women and 38, men. This year, the women’s and labour rights group has had 29 new cases already.

“These workers don’t just experience one form of violation. They experience multiple, at least six, forms of abuse. Most have not received their wages for months or have had their salary deducted for accommodation, uniforms, food, leave or work permits; many are deprived of good food, have poor living and working conditions, have not had rest days for months or years, their passports are withheld and they are made to work long hours without overtime.

“And then there is verbal, physical and sexual abuse as well. So when we talk of interventions, these involve different policies, different laws and different stakeholders. They face complex and unique challenges compared with other workers which is why we need a separate law or at least amendments to current laws.

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“The numbers may seem small compared to the more than 250,000 registered domestic workers in Malaysia but one case is already far too many. One death is one too many,” says Dass.



Because they work in homes, hidden from public scrutiny or inspection by labour officers, some employers feel they can exploit and subject their domestic workers to sustained abuse.

### **Equal rights for all**

The Domestic Workers Coalition came up with a Domestic Workers Draft Bill in 2016 to plug the holes in current legislation which has failed to protect domestic workers.

“Domestic workers are in a bind. The Employment Act doesn’t protect them and if they choose to get away from their abusive employers by running away, they are automatically declared as undocumented workers – this denies them access to justice.

They are then criminalised and can be prosecuted under the Immigration Act. It seems like the authorities, enforcement agencies and even the judiciary continues to punish the victims who really are powerless.

“This is what we are trying to change,” says Dass.

Chairperson for the Bar Council’s Migrants, Refugees and Immigration Affairs Committee Datuk Seri M. Ramachelvam points out that the government had proposed Regulations for Domestic Workers in 2014 but as it has not been gazetted, there is still no legislation to protect domestic workers.

“The Bar Council and civil society has called upon the government to gazette the Regulations as it will afford some form of legal protection and rights to domestic workers. However, the proposed Regulations have many serious shortcomings and the Bar Council and civil society has proposed changes which we feel should be addressed and incorporated.

“It is also imperative that domestic workers have a standard and fair contract incorporating the rights according to these Regulations and the Employment Act 1955 that are subject to the relevant modifications based on the nature of domestic work,” he says.

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Currently, although the Penal Code protects workers who were sexually or physically abused, cases typically drag on for months and most victims don't want to go through the prolonged court process.

"To complicate matters further, migrant workers who file cases against their perpetrators are not allowed to work while their cases are ongoing. It's frustrating and demotivating and most of the time, these women just would rather go home," says Dass.

It is also an uphill battle trying to file cases under the Anti-Trafficking in Persons (Atip) Act, as enforcement officers don't identify domestic workers as being trafficked.

"But for us, it's very clear. They *are* trafficked. If you are working without wages for six months, have not been given a day off, have been cheated by recruiting agents, that qualifies as trafficking," says Dass.

The coalition – comprising non-government organisations Women's Aid Organisation, Caram Asia, Liber 8, Migrant Ministry, Persatuan Kebajikan Good Shepherd, AOHD (Archdiocesan Officer for Human Development), Change Your World, Tenaganita and Malaysian Trade Union – worked with gender, human and legal rights experts and consulted with the International Labour Organisation in Geneva in drafting the bill.

"There are guidelines and memorandums of understanding between countries that recommend measures to protect these workers. But these are not binding and we can't hold people accountable based on these agreements.

"We need binding laws and we need to act now because this culture of violence and isolation against domestic workers is becoming the norm. We need laws that

recognise them as workers, and make sure that they get a decent life, decent wages and decent work. What does this mean? That they work eight hours a day. They have a proper living space with a bed and so on. They have to have a rest day. They need three proper, full meals. They need to be paid. All this must be stipulated clearly," says Dass.

She reckons that it has been a challenge trying to push the Bill because "it's not about local women".

"Maybe we don't relate because these are migrant workers but we have to look at this as a human right's issue. Just because they left their home country it doesn't mean they have left their rights behind.

"Also, there are local women who do domestic work and who also do not enjoy the benefits of workers. This is a human issue. It's a human rights' issue," emphasises Dass.

Just recently, members of the coalition met with minister in the Prime Minister's department, Datuk Paul Low, and presented him with a draft of the Bill.

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“We met with him three weeks ago and he said he would review the document. We also went to the Human Resources Ministry earlier and though they didn’t seem to want to enact a separate law, they are working towards formalising domestic work. We don’t disagree with this as long as domestic workers enjoy all the benefits of other workers and they include a separate clause that allows for inspections to be conducted in the private domain where they work,” says Dass.

### ***Modern-day slavery***

“How can you improve the lives of domestic workers when you still class them as servants? There is no dignity, no respect,” says Dass.

As a sector, domestic work has grown significantly over the decades. According to statistics from the International Domestic Workers Federation, there were 67.1 million domestic workers globally in 2015, of whom 11.5 million were migrant domestic workers. 80% of these workers were women.



Bar Council’s Migrants, Refugees & Immigration Affairs Committee chairperson Ramachelvam says domestic workers should not be treated as commodities.

Domestic workers contribute significantly to national economies – if nothing else, they enable the increase in dual-income families. However, despite their contributions to households and national economies, domestic workers are placed at the low end of the care economy – they work the longest hours for very low wages.

There is also a stigma attached to domestic work mainly because, says Dass, it is the poorest and neediest who are occupied in it.

“If you look at our history, domestic workers have always come from poor families with lesser privilege. These young women were not paid wages but were instead paid in kind – accommodation, food and so on. Their families were fine with the arrangement at the time.

“Nowadays, employers have paid between RM7,000 and RM15,000 to recruiters for their maids and some have the mindset that they have purchased the workers and therefore the girls are expected to do their bidding for little pay ... some of our workers are not paid for up to nine months. Isn’t that forced labour? It’s modern-day slavery,” she says.



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Ramachelvam agrees, adding that domestic workers should not be treated as commodities but as human beings.

“They are human beings providing an invaluable service to us. They come away from home to our country to assist their own lives and lives of the family. They have families who depend on them back in their countries.

“The Malaysian Government should ratify and adopt the Convention 189 – Convention on Decent work for Domestic Workers which guarantees labour protections to domestic workers on par with other categories of workers while allowing considerable flexibility in implementations. This must become a reality,” he says.

It’s also a gender issue, Dass points out.

“In our culture, women are expected to the housework. Our mothers do it, our wives do it and our daughters are expected to do it. So housework is not recognised as legitimate work. Children grow up thinking it’s ok to raise your hand to your domestic worker. It used to be wives but that is being highlighted as a crime now. And the law has to recognise this as a crime too. Only then can we change the mindset of people. Once the law has been changed, we can hold people accountable,” she says.

## WHEN WILL IT END ?

The Star, 6 April 2018





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### When will it end?

Star2 6 Apr 2018 +1 more

THESE are just some of the reported cases of domestic workers abuse in the last decade. The cases aren't isolated. Indonesian domestic worker Adelina Lisao was not the first to die at the hands of her employers. Until there are laws that protect domestic workers, such abuse is likely to go on.

2001 28-year-old Indonesian maid Sonirih Casnawi was pronounced dead on arrival at the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia Hospital. She had at least 45 injuries and internal haemorrhages, including a ruptured pancreas when she

was brought to the hospital. Her employer was sentenced to 20 years jail for manslaughter



In 2014, Fong and his wife Teoh were sentenced to death for starving their domestic worker Miss Isti; yesterday their sentence was amended to 20 years' jail each.

in 2005.

2004 19-year-old Nirmala Bonat from from Nusa Tenggara Timur (West Timor) suffered months of abuse, including being burnt with a hot iron, scalded with boiling water and savagely beaten. Her employer,

Yim Pek Ha was sentenced to 12 years in jail after she was found guilty on three counts of causing grievous hurt to Bonat.

2011 Housewife M. Poongavanam was sentenced to eight years' jail and fined RM20,000 for voluntarily causing grievous hurt to her Indonesian maid with a hot iron.

2012 Immigration Department officers found 105 foreign women held captive at a maid agency in Bandar Baru Klang. Besides being treated roughly, some of the women claimed that their food was rationed by the agency and that they were even forced to eat paper as punishment if they tried to ask for their salaries.

2013 • Malaysian couple, Soh Chew Tong, 44, and his wife Chin Chui Ling, 42, were



sentenced to 24 years in jail for starving their Cambodian maid, Mey Sichan to death. She weighed just 26kg (57lbs) and had bruises on her body. Police said she died from acute gastritis and ulcers likely caused by lack of food over a long period. The 23-year-old had been working for the family for eight months.

- Businessman Mohd Shukur Suradi and his teacher wife Daeng Norulasyikin Bachok were found guilty of causing harm to their Indonesian domestic worker Marsini in 2012 with a knife, golf club, belt, hot oil, clothes hanger, ladle and hot spoon. They were also found guilty of trafficking Marsini, 20, into the country. The High Court later acquitted

the prosecution had not established a prima facie case against the two.

- Thirty-year-old domestic worker Maria Roberta Sain – who worked for her employers in Sungai Bestari, Kuala Lumpur – ran to the authorities alleging she had been physically abused by her employers for eight months.

2014 • An Indonesian maid working in Tangga Batu, Melaka, escaped from her employer's home where she was allegedly sexually abused by an 85-year-old man.

- Filipina maid Nenita Batiencila Elcamel was carried out by policemen from her former employer's condominium in Kelana Jaya, Petaling Jaya, with her head drenched in blood and

bours who suspected she was being abused reported their suspicions to the police.

Nenita's former employer pleaded guilty to hitting her and was fined RM4,000 and jailed for a day.

- 32-year-old Indonesian maid Meriance Kabu was rescued from her employers who had tortured her for eight months until her teeth were knocked out after they kicked and stomped on her face. She also had a hard object shoved into her private parts and was not properly fed, among other forms of abuse.

- Fong Kong Meng, 58, and his wife Teoh Ching Yen, 56, were sentenced to death by hanging for starving their domestic worker, Miss Isti, to



**In 2004, the abuse case of West Timorese Nirmala became headline news and caught nationwide attention.**

time of her death.

2016 • Suyanti Sutrinso, 19, was found unconscious by a drain in Mutiara Damansara, Petaling Jaya, after she escaped from her employer. Her employer, Rozita Mohamad Ali, was sentenced to eight years imprisonment in March 2018



Suyanti with a kitchen knife, mop, hanger and umbrella.

2017 • Lim Lee Poh, 47, a single mother of two was sentenced to three years' jail by a magistrate's court in Penang for scalding her domestic helper, Koay Ley Kheng, 26.

- Police arrest a 48-year-old doctor and her 50-year-old bus driver/businessman husband who allegedly abused their 60-year-old Indonesian maid at their home in Skudai, Johor. They did not pay her wages for eight years. The arrests came following a report lodged by the Indonesian consulate-general.

## SHAPING NEW TRENDS TO KEEP WITH TIMES

The Star, 21 April 2018

TRENDS and styles evolve over time, including landscape architecture design.

The practice changes to suit current social needs, responding to surroundings and shaping the lifestyle people live in.

“Landscape architecture used to be about placing trees and having individual green space. It is now about creating an environment and integrating greenery with other elements,” said Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (Ilam) president Assoc Prof Dr Osman Mohd Tahir.

“The idea of a park then would be where to place gazebos, footpaths and plants. A park could have engineering, social, economic and environment problems that could be solved using landscape solutions.”



Osman says landscape architecture is about creating an environment while integrating greenery and other elements

For example, he said, a retention pond designed to address stormwater runoff or flood management issues could, at the same time, be landscaped into a park.

“This creatively and innovatively solves problems by incorporating both aesthetics and functionality,” explained Osman.

He cited River of Life (ROL) as an example of a project solving multiple issues.

The project is aimed at transforming the Klang River into a vibrant and livable waterfront with high economic value.

Osman said ROL turned the river into a space for people to enjoy the outdoors, provided a solution for flood and water quality issues, and gave life to a river with thriving flora and fauna.



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“All towns and cities start with a river. As a city grows, people will ignore the river and throw rubbish into it, making it a nuisance.

“They later realise that the river plays an important role in the city’s development and the need to revitalise it.

“ROL gives a positive impact to Kuala Lumpur as a world-class city,” he said, adding that landscape architects played an important role alongside engineers, architects and other professionals in a project.

According to him, other iconic projects that made an impact on Malaysia’s landscape infrastructure and economy were KLCC Park and Taman Tugu.



The River of Life is seen as an example of a project that solves multiple issues, giving a positive impact to Kuala Lumpur as a world-class city.

“KLCC Park sets the standard of a park functioning as a connector by linking it to buildings around the area. This has multiple benefits – socially, economically and environmentally.

“Taman Tugu will have a great impact to the development of Kuala Lumpur. Having an urban forest with a dedicated amount of space to greenery is beneficial to people.”

Awareness of landscape architecture trends also affects the education aspect, he said, as the curriculum has to be adjusted to ensure graduates keep up with the times.

“Students need to come up with new ideas, look at things in a different manner and meet industry demand,” said Osman, who is also the dean of Universiti Putra Malaysia’s faculty of design and architecture.

He said Ilam sets the stewardship and roadmaps as well as advances the landscape architecture profession.

“The institute offers continuous professional development programmes for professional landscape architects and related specialisations, such as green infrastructure, green innovation, green technology, stormwater management and skyscraper greenery,” he said, adding that some programmes are done with partner organisations.

He said there were about 300 landscape architecture graduates a year, with an employability rate of 85%.

He was speaking at an interview held ahead of the Malaysia Landscape Architecture Awards (MLAA) and Ilam Gala Night.

This year marks the 10th edition of the annual event that recognises quality landscape architecture work, projects and professionals.



Oval, curved and irregular lines and shapes have taken centre stage as they create a less formal feel to a landscape design. Seen here is Verdi Condominium property in Cyberjaya.

“MLAA started off by recognising selected professionals for their contributions at the International Federation of Landscape Architects (IFLA) Congress held in Malaysia in 2007.

“As integration and collaboration with stakeholders became more important, we saw the industry as one and started recognising developers, contractors, researchers, local authorities and the media for their efforts,” he said.



The River of Life is seen as an example of a project that solves multiple issues, giving a positive impact to Kuala Lumpur as a world-class city.

MLAA is held in April to coincide with World Landscape Architecture Month.

“The awards and MLAA yearbook honour the best projects and designs from the previous year.

“These have a huge impact on the industry as they serve as a benchmark for quality and standard for landscape development. They also give an idea of what the public needs and values they want in landscape development,” he added.

New to MLAA 2018 is a category to recognise international projects done by non-Malaysians, as Ilam felt it would raise the industry’s standards.

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He said the quality of awards offered by MLAA was linked to the National Landscape Policy, which is for Malaysia to be the most beautiful garden nation by 2020.



The KLCC Park sets the standard of a park functioning as a connector by linking it to buildings around the area. This has multiple benefits – socially, economically and environmentally.

“In conjunction with the IFLA Congress, which Malaysia will next host in 2020, we are looking at formulating a new Landscape Architecture Agenda 2050 to pave the direction for our profession and to play a more influential role in national development,” he said.

“Malaysia’s current population is about 31 million, but it is projected to reach 44 million by 2050, with more than 90% living in urban areas and cities.

“People will still need space for recreation and living, but land will be a commodity by then. It is still a must to have greenery, whether horizontally or vertically.

“We will also have to deal with issues such as urban heat island, climate change, food security and oxygen production,” Osman added.

Realising the issues and needs to be faced in future, Osman said the agenda would pave the direction for the landscape architecture practice and for Ilam to play a more influential role in national development.



## 2018 landscape trends

According to the Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia, these are the landscape trends for this year.

### PRODUCTIVE LANDSCAPE

Productive landscape is a design concept integrating food production into the design of urban open spaces or living environments. This serves to connect and educate the public about plants which are edible yet aesthetically pleasing for landscape and even local consumption purposes.



### BIOPHILIC DESIGN

Biophilia is defined as the inherent human inclination to affiliate with nature. Biophilic design, an extension of biophilia, incorporates natural materials, natural light, vegetation, views of nature and other experiences of the natural world into the modern built environment.



### FOREST WILDERNESS

This concept injects greenery into spaces where nature has been reduced due to rapid urbanisation. It incorporates a more unkempt look, with overgrown plants and less managed landscape, to create a forest-like feel.

### OUTDOOR ROOM

There is now an increased usage of outdoor spaces in gardens and purposefully landscaped spaces for leisure, socialising and relaxation. Outdoor rooms or a confined landscape area can double up as activity or quiet spaces within innovative landscape designs.



### INTERCITY GREEN NETWORK

A green network for recreational purposes, such as jogging or cycling pathways, has become a trend in cities. This connects cities with suburban areas, thus creating a new way of commuting and reducing one's own carbon footprint.

### RAW AND SEASONED

Some landscape spaces incorporate raw and unpolished materials that season over time, which creates a timeless feel. The use of materials such as untreated bricks, flooring and walls, unpolished concrete within buildings and hardscape treatments bring a touch of modernity and lower maintenance costs to the design.



### FRAME OF SURPRISES

Walls and doorways often frame elements of surprise in landscape design. This design trend has been revived recently through the use of layers of walls, separating outdoor spaces and leading visitors to small and cosy enclaves. Each turn in such a design is a change of view, with an element of surprise to offer for visitors.

### ORGANIC AND IRREGULAR

Oval, curved and irregular lines and shapes have taken centre stage as they create a less formal feel to a landscape design, while adding a little futuristic touch at the same time.

### BOLD AND BEAUTIFUL

Bold colours, with high contrasting effects, stand out amidst a lush, green backdrop. Designs with splashes of contrasting colours are often used for garden elements, design features and motifs, making these striking elements stand out.



### GROUND TO THE SKY

This concept seamlessly connects ground levels to rooftop gardens, and provides continuous green spaces for public enjoyment. This can be achieved via a ramp or meandering pathway that leads from the ground to a green space on a rooftop.





## KEEN ON BEING AN URBAN ECO-WARRIOR? CHECK OUT THE KLANG VALLEY CITY NATURE CHALLENGE

The Star, 24 April 2018



The network of residential areas across cities (with their trees and gardens) can help link up denser forest areas. Photos: Rimba Project

Did you know that in certain urban areas, over 80% of tree species may have commercial or medicinal value?

Or that birds like the Oriental honey-buzzard, pied triller and green-billed malkoha, fully protected under the Wildlife Conservation Act 2010 (Act 716), are found in our urban backyards?

There is a treasure trove of diverse plants and wildlife co-existing with our cities' steel, glass and concrete structures – but not many people know this, and therein lies a problem: a lack of data. Add to that the still ongoing and rapid development of most of Malaysia's major urban areas, and it all adds up to species being threatened with extinction, according to Benjamin Ong, founder of the Rimba Project, an education and outreach programme in urban ecology and conservation based at the Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden, Universiti Malaya (UM).

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“The obvious candidates would be the endemic species. For example, *Aleisanthia rupestris* and four other plants occur only on the Klang Gates Ridge (Bukit Tabur) in Ampang (in Selangor) and nowhere else on the planet,” he says.

“However, the problem with urban species is that they tend to be less ‘spectacular’ than species found in the wild. Therefore, many urban species are not studied in sufficient depth, and many so-called ‘common species’ may well be disappearing right under our noses.”

Botanists have noticed that some forest dwelling plants like *Porterandia sp* (cempaka hutan), *Tacca sp* (black lily) and *Codonoboea* are becoming increasingly rare in the city because urban forests are declining at an alarming rate, says Ong.



Malkohas are typically associated with scrub (belukar) and other forests. Their presence in urban areas suggests that we are still surrounded by forest pockets sufficient to support their population. Seen here is a Green-billed Malkoha.

“Some people will argue that there are still plenty of these species in forests far from the city, and that there is fantastic biodiversity in places like Taman Negara, Belum-Temenggor and Endau-Rompin. But given that 75% of Malaysians now live in urban areas (according to a 2016 World Bank report), there is a need to conserve flora and fauna in and near cities, so that the human experience of nature and wildlife does not go extinct,” emphasises Ong, who is also a research assistant at Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden.

One of the challenges conservation faces is the lack of data, which is needed to make informed decisions.

“Documentation efforts are few and far between. We lack baseline data for urban biodiversity; it is not something that is regularly documented unless it’s done as part of environmental impact assessments or as scientific studies undertaken on a case-by-case basis,” says Ong, adding that these studies are seldom, if ever, made available to the public.



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Once common in the Klang Valley, Mata Lembu is increasingly rare, retreating along with forest remnants. The attractive tree produces bright orange flowers and is named for the slit-like scars on its bark, which resemble the drowsy eyes of cows.

In 2017, the CNC spread across the United States, and this year, it will be held as an international event across 60 cities.

In Malaysia, Rimba Project will be co-organising the Klang Valley City Nature Challenge (KV CNC) over this coming weekend, from Friday to Monday, with Water Warriors, an environmental project in UM set up to protect and conserve water bodies on campus.

The Klang Valley is the first Malaysian and first South-East Asian urban area to participate in the challenge.

This, then, is the reason for the City Nature Challenge (CNC). The international project encourages people to find and document plants and wildlife in cities across the globe.

The bioblitz-style, mobile app-based competition involves cities competing to see which can gather the most observations of nature, find the most species, and which can engage the most people. (Bioblitz is an event that focuses on finding and identifying as many species as possible in a specific area over a short period of time.)

The first CNC was held in 2016 as an eight-day competition between Los Angeles and San Francisco in the United States. Over 20,000 observations were made by more than 1,000 people in a one-week period, cataloguing approximately 1,600 species in each location.



Bats typically feed on fruits or insects. The lesser short-nosed fruit bat, commonly found in the city, can travel great distances to feed.

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The event is not site-specific and any observations made in the Klang Valley's 10 local authority areas during the four-day challenge may be included in the project. The 10 areas are Kuala Lumpur, Klang, Kajang, Subang Jaya, Petaling Jaya, Selayang, Shah Alam, Ampang Jaya, Putrajaya and Sepang.

The KV CNC will help establish a publicly-accessible biodiversity baseline.

“Biodiversity loss is one of the most urgent environmental issues today. Nations and communities worldwide face the challenge of keeping accurate and consistently up-to-date records of wildlife. Knowing what species exist in our cities and where they are helps us conserve and protect them,” says Ong.

The CNC is also an example of a citizen science initiative where members of the public collaborate with scientific experts in the collection and interpretation of data.

“There are citizen science initiatives in Malaysia, but as far as we know, none on urban wildlife and biodiversity. We hope that by introducing this concept through the CNC, we can provide the public with an alternative, hands-on entry into the world of conservation science.

“The KV CNC is no silver bullet or quick-fix formula, and we won't have a complete understanding of urban ecology after the event. But it is a much-needed first step and will, we hope, get the ball rolling for a more substantial discourse on urban conservation over the next few years,” says Ong.



Ong, founder of the Rimba Project, leading a school nature education programme at the Rimba Ilmu Botanic Garden, Universiti Malaya.

### How the KV CNC works

You can participate as an individual or a group in your own backyard, local park, on a school or university field trip, or on a hike – as long as it is within the Klang Valley. The necessary training and capacity building will be provided by Rimba Project if required.

Using the iNaturalist app, take a picture of a plant or animal (or record a sound), and identify the species and location.

While the main objective is to document nature where you are (home, school, workplace, etc), the group welcomes participants keen to join the KV CNC organising committee at selected sites listed on their website.



## UNSUSTAINABLE EXPANSION

The Star, 24 April 2018



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# Unsustainable expansion

Land degradation is a problem that needs to be solved locally but in a global context.

Star2 24 Apr 2018 By KARINA TOLEDO

LESS than 25% of Earth's surface remains free from substantial impacts of human activities. The proportion is set to fall to a mere 10% or less by 2050, according to projections produced by the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity & Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

"Only some regions in the poles, deserts and the most in-

accessible parts of the tropical forests remain intact," says South African scholar Robert Scholes, co-chair of the World-wide Land Degradation and Restoration Assessment Report launched by IPBES last month in Medellin, Colombia.

The full report and a summary for policymakers were approved by the 129 state members of IPBES during the



**Aerial view of the Pantanal wetlands, in Mato Grosso state, Brazil. The Pantanal is the largest wetland on the planet and is located in Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, covering more than 170,500sq km and is home to more than 4,000 species of plants and animals. This ecosystem is at risk of collapsing if the rivers' headwaters are not protected from the advance of monoculture plantations, waterways, hydroelectric plants and deforestation, warn scientists and activists.**

6th session of its Plenary, held from March 17-24.

According to the report,

more than 1.5 billion hectares of natural ecosystems had been converted to croplands by 2014.

Croplands and pastures now cover more than a third of Earth's land surface. Recent clearance of forests, grasslands and wetlands has been "concentrated in some of the most species-rich ecosystems on the planet", the document stresses.

Scholes says degradation can be defined as the many processes that lead to a steady decline in biodiversity and ecosystem functions or services in terrestrial and associated aquatic ecosystems. "It's when a region's capacity to sustain life, both human and non-human, decreases persistently," he explains.

The report says unsustainable expansion of areas dedicated to cropping and livestock production is one of the main causes of the problem, which

will be exacerbated by growing demand for food and biofuels. It forecasts that pesticide and fertiliser use will double by 2050.

"Excessive use of these chemical products contaminates not only the soil but also aquatic systems and eventually affects coastal areas. There are hundreds of dead areas in regions like the Gulf of Mexico, and this is happening because of the way we manage land. So it's also a matter of water security and coastal conservation," says Robert Watson, Chair of IPBES.

Another important factor that has contributed to ecosystem degradation, according to the scientists who drafted the IPBES report, is high-consumption lifestyles in more developed economies, combined

with rising consumption in developing and emerging economies.

Combating the problem, they write, must include a shift toward more sustainable diets with more plant-based foods, less animal protein, and greater concern for the methods used to produce food and other consumer goods.

"We're not telling people to stop eating meat, we're asking them to look at how it's produced, and above all to put an end to food waste," Watson says. "Today, 35% to 40% of the food produced in the developed countries is wasted."

According to Luca Montanarella (Italy), co-chair of the report with Scholes, communication work is required to help people who live in urban areas

reconnect with the land that feeds them.

"We expect the solution to problems like this one to come from outside, but we have our own responsibility as consumers," he says. "We're willing to pay high prices for smartphones and computers, but we want food to be cheap. We don't notice the impact of our food choices because it often occurs far away from us."

Land degradation is a problem that needs to be solved locally but in a global context, according to Montanarella.

According to Scholes, government subsidies to farmers tend to drive unsustainable production growth by enabling them to take more risks.

"It's possible to increase production without encroach-

ing on natural areas and without using excessive amounts of chemicals," Scholes says. "Intensification is a large part of the answer, but so is improving land use management practices: nutrient cycling is an example."

Brazil is in a favourable position to deal with these issues, he adds, because in recent years, it has strengthened its scientific research capabilities and also because it has specialists who are able to advise on the best solutions.

"There's a political clamour for an end to deforestation and to the destruction of wetlands," Scholes says. "We have an opportunity to start doing things better. There's room in the market for this. People will increasingly ask whether the

goods they buy from Brazil are good or bad" from an environmental standpoint.

Watson acknowledges that biofuels, soybeans and beef are locomotives for the Brazilian economy and that these land-based commodities are valuable to many other countries. "The challenge is to produce them more sustainably and implement best practices," he says. "There's a smarter way to do this. It would be a major contribution from Brazil."

### Three faces of one problem

According to the IPBES report, land degradation through human activities is undermining the wellbeing of at least 3.2 billion people, or more than two-fifths of humanity. This is



one of the main drivers of migration, alongside conflicts between communities and the impoverishment of populations, in Watson's view.

"Degradation of Earth's land surface through human activities is pushing the planet toward a sixth mass species extinction," Scholes warns.

Watson adds that land degradation, biodiversity loss and climate change are three different faces of the same central challenge. They intensify each other and cannot be tackled in isolation.

The IPBES report finds that land degradation is a major contributor to climate change via both greenhouse gas emissions resulting from deforestation and the release of carbon previously stored in the soil. It

estimates annual global emissions of up to 4.4 billion metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> due to land degradation alone between 2000 and 2009.

"Given the importance of soil's carbon absorption and storage functions, the avoidance, reduction and reversal of land degradation could provide more than a third of the most cost-effective greenhouse gas mitigation activities needed by 2030 to keep global warming under the 2°C threshold targeted in the Paris Agreement on climate change, increase food and water security, and contribute to the avoidance of conflict and migration," the report says.

The report also assesses completed and ongoing land restoration processes. Scholes

explains that restoration as used in the report means any intentional initiative to accelerate the recovery of degraded ecosystems.

"We made a distinction between restoration and rehabilitation," he said.

"Rehabilitation means initiatives aimed at recovering some of the land's critical functions and creating the conditions for it possibly to be restored, but returning it to what it was before degradation may not be possible in many places."

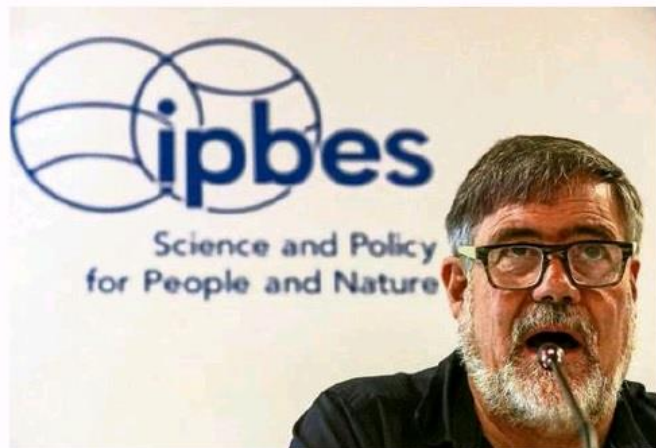
According to Scholes, restoration of degraded agricultural land, for example, may entail returning the soil to its original quality and integrating crop, livestock and forestry systems.

Arch Results

Successful responses in wetlands include control of pollution sources and reflooding areas damaged by draining.

In urban areas, the key options for action include spatial planning, replanting with native species, the development of "green infrastructure" such as parks and riverways, remediation of contaminated and sealed soils (eg, under asphalt), wastewater treatment, and river channel restoration.

The report says solving the problem requires integrating the agricultural, forestry, energy, water, infrastructure and service agendas, along with coordinating policy between different ministries to encourage simultaneously more sustainable practices for the production and consumption of land-



**Degradation of Earth's land surface through human activities is pushing the planet toward a sixth mass species extinction, says Scholes.**

based commodities.

On average, the benefits of land restoration are 10 times higher than the costs, according to the report.

"Implementing the right ac-

tions to combat land degradation can transform the lives of millions of people across the planet, but this will become more difficult and more costly the longer we take to act,"

**BIM MEMBER INSTITUTIONS**

- Malaysian Pharmaceutical Society (MPS)
- Royal Institution of Surveyors Malaysia (RISM)
- The Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM)
- Pertubuhan Akitek Malaysia (PAM)
- Malaysian Medical Association (MMA)
- Malaysian Dental Association (MDA)
- Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP)
- Veterinary Association Malaysia (VAM)

- Malaysian Institute of Interior Designers (MIID)
- Malaysian Society of Soil Science (MSSS)
- Malaysian Association of Social Workers (MASW)
- The Plastics & Rubber Institute of Malaysia (PRIM)
- Agricultural Institute of Malaysia (AIM)
- The Chartered Institute of Building Malaysia (CIOBM)
- Institute of Landscape Architects Malaysia (ILAM)

- Institute of Internal Auditors Malaysia (IIAM)
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