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Economic Overview

Key statistics	Latest release	Previous rate
Quarterly GDP growth	5.3% (1Q2006)	5.4% (4Q2005)
Annual GDP growth	5.3% (2005)	7.1% (2004)
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	3.9% (Jun-06)	3.9% (May-06)
Industrial Production Index (IPI)	131.5 (May-06)	130.3 (Apr-06)
Base Lending Rate (BLR)	6.72% (July-06)	6.72% (June-06)
Exchange rate: RM to US dollar	RM3.654 (31/07)	RM3.675 (30/06)

Source: Department of Statistics Malaysia & Bank Negara Malaysia

- The Cabinet has given the green light for a second Penang bridge as well as a monorail system on the island to be built through Private Finance Initiative under the 9th Malaysia Plan. He said that for the second Penang bridge, the concession to build, manage, operate and maintain the project would be given to the UEM Group, the concession holder for the present bridge link to the mainland built in 1985.
- Khazanah Nasional Bhd is targeting to complete by year-end a master plan for the South Johor Economic Region (SJER) that will consist of several sub-plans as well. Khazanah said there were five main strategic pillars that the planning had to follow. They are international rim positioning, establishing hard and soft infrastructure enablers, investments in catalyst projects, creation of a strong regulatory authority as well as ensuring socio-economic equity and buy-in from the local population.
- Construction projects under the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP) are widely expected to be rolled out at a faster pace in the third quarter (Q3), 2006, industry sources and analysts said. Several projects have, in fact, been awarded, such as upgrading works for the Kota Kinabalu International Airport for a total contract value of RM1.44bil.
- Malaysia's exports in May rose 13.2% year-on-year to RM48.28bil, the second-highest monthly figure so far this year. It was also 5.6% higher than the preceding month. Imports in May grew 11.8% to RM40.23bil compared with the same month last year and was 2.9% higher from that in April. The May trade surplus represented a 21.5% increase from April, marking the 103rd consecutive month of trade surpluses since November 1997.
- Building Industry Presidents' Council (BIPC) president Datuk Eddy Chen Lok Loi said the cost of most building materials had escalated many fold due to the fuel price hike. "With pricing pressures intensifying, costs of building materials are fluctuating rapidly, resulting in uncertainty of supply".

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Know your neighbourhood

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- Japan and Malaysia's free trade agreement (FTA) came into effect on 13th July 2006, which will eliminate tariffs on US\$27 billion (RM98.5 billion) of goods within 10 years and boost trade and investment between the two countries.
- Bank Negara's monetary policy committee has decided to leave the overnight policy rate unchanged at 3.5%. In a statement, Bank Negara said the local economy had performed well during the first half of 2006, sustained by robust domestic demand and strong global economic growth.
- YTL Corp will submit a proposal to the Government to build a Bullet Train, which will cost up to RM8 billion. The train will travel from KL Sentral station to Singapore in 90 minutes.

INVESTMENTS

Cognos to fast track support centre project

[\(Top\)](#)

Business intelligence solutions provider Cognos Pte Ltd plans to fast track the development of its customer support centre in Malaysia, said vice-president for Asia David Runacres. Runacres said the group's Malaysian operations, Cognos Sdn Bhd, was actively recruiting at the moment. It hoped to hire about six people in the next two to three months. He said the support centre, which would service the Asian region, would be based at the company's Petaling Jaya office.

(The Star-5th July 2006)

TRW to set up Cyberjaya centre

[\(Top\)](#)

US-based TRW Automotive plans to pump an additional RM40 million into the country to set up its new information technology (IT) global support and competency centre in Cyberjaya.

(New Straits Times-7th July 2006)

Cyberport to open in Johor Bahru

[\(Top\)](#)

Johor first multi-media super corridor (MSC) cyberport will swing its doors open on July 25 with 26 local and foreign companies starting operations. The firms, which are expected to spend RM39 million in total start-up capital, will all be located at Menara MSC Cyberport in Johor Bahru, was previously known as Menara Sarawak Enterprise.

(New Straits Times-11st July 2006)



Citibank Bukit Tengah branch to focus on SMEs

[\(Top\)](#)

Citibank Bhd's latest RM7mil branch in Bukit Tengah will focus on small- and medium-scaled enterprises (SMEs) in the northern region. Citigroup country officer and chief executive officer Piyush Gupta said Citibank would spend another RM3mil to RM5mil over the next 12 months on promotional activities to market its credit facilities for the SMEs. He said Citibank would establish another three branches in the country by the year-end. The next branch would open in Puchong, Selangor.

(The Star-11st July 2006)

Frontken to build plant in Kulim

[\(Top\)](#)

Newly-listed Mesdaq company Frontken Corp Bhd plans to spend more than RM25 million to build the initial phase of its fourth plant in Malaysia. Frontken's offerings include thermal spray coating, a process where molten or semi-molten particles are applied onto a surface to minimise corrosion, and allow the surface to withstand higher temperatures, among other uses. The plant on a 2.7ha site at the Kulim Hi-Technology Industrial Park in Kedah would complement Frontken's existing facilities at Bukit Mertajam, Penang.

(New Straits Times-12nd July 2006)

Cisco sets up customer relationship centre in KL

[\(Top\)](#)

Networking solutions leader Cisco Systems has selected Kuala Lumpur as the location for its new sales unit, the Inside Sales Customer Relationship Centre to serve South-East Asian customers. "Inside sales" is a term for sales people who build long-distance "high-touch" relationships with customers using communication technologies. – Bernama

(The Star-13rd July 2006)

Shell aims to open 20 more outlets this year

[\(Top\)](#)

Shell Malaysia Trading Sdn Bhd is targeting to open 20 new outlets this year, bringing the total number of its petrol stations to almost 850. Currently, it has 830 outlets in operation but managing director Mohzani Abdul Wahab said a few would be closed this year, especially certain smaller outlets with leases expiring.

(The Star-14th July 2006)

JTB aligns Johor ops

[\(Top\)](#)

Johore Tin Bhd (JTB) will next month start moving all its operations in Johor to a new centralised manufacturing plant along Jalan Senai-Seelong. The company would first relocate the operations and production lines of subsidiary Unican Industries Sdn Bhd, now operating from rented premises in Skudai, said managing director Edward Goh Swee Wang. Next to move would be Johore Tin Factory Sdn Bhd, now operating in Larkin industrial estate, he said. He added that its Kluang operations under Kluang Tin and Can Factory Sdn Bhd would be the last to relocate to the new plant that occupies 291,732 sq ft freehold land.

(The Star-14th July 2006)



JHM may set up own plant in Kedah or Penang

[\(Top\)](#)

Kedah-based JHM Consolidation Bhd plans to establish its own manufacturing plant in the northern state within three years, to meet growing demand for its high-brightness light-emitting diodes (HB LED) and DC micromotor components. Executive chairman and managing director Datuk Tan Keng Send said JHM may set up the plant in Sungai Petani, Kedah, or Penang at an initial investment of RM12 million and RM20 million respectively.

(New Straits Times-14th July 2006)

HSBC to seek approval for more branches

[\(Top\)](#)

HSBC Bank (M) Bhd will next month apply for Bank Negara approval to open four or five new branches, said deputy chairman and chief executive officer Datuk Zarir J. Cama. Among the policy's parameters are that of the four new branches, one has to be located in a market centre, two in semi-urban centres and the fourth in a non-urban centre. By year-end, HSBC would have 40 branches in the country.

(New Straits Times-14th July 2006)

TM Net opens 15th CASO

[\(Top\)](#)

Telekom Malaysia's (TM) subsidiary TM Net Sdn Bhd, a leading Internet service provider, has opened its 15th Clickers Authorised Service Outlet (CASO) to serve as the one-stop shop for Internet and convergence solutions for customers in Kota Kinabalu. The centre in Luyang, which is the second to be opened in the state after Tawau, would provide consultation and sales of TM Net's products.

(The Sun-17th July 2006)

Cisco chooses Malaysia as regional service hub

[\(Top\)](#)

Cisco Systems has picked Malaysia as its Inside Sales Customer Relationship Centre hub for the Southeast Asian region. Cisco selected Malaysia as the location for the centre because of the country's highly educated multi-lingual and multi cultural workforce and competitive cost structure.

(New Straits Times-17th July 2006)

CCM eyeing strategic buys, investments

[\(Top\)](#)

Chemical Company of Malaysia Bhd (CCM) is eyeing more strategic acquisitions and investments in Malaysia and the Asean region within the next three years to strengthen its core pharmaceutical, fertiliser and chemical businesses. To date, the group is in the midst of constructing a RM60mil state-of-the-art pharmaceutical plant. The new plant is located adjacent to CCM's existing oral dosage plant in Bangi, Selangor and is slated for completion next year. We have plans to grow the chemical business with the expansion of our chloro-alkali plant in Pasir Gudang, Johor. Investments in our water treatment business are also currently being evaluated," he said.

(The Star-17th July 2006)



Plant to triple Waterco output

[\(Top\)](#)

Waterco (Far East) Sdn Bhd, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Waterco Ltd, expects its newly-launched plant to increase its production capacity value by more than three times from the current RM50mil recorded per annum, said managing director Goh Soon Sinn. The 18,000-sq ft plant in Sungai Buloh with an investment of about RM25mil has a warehouse, manufacturing, design and product development, as well as research and development (R&D) divisions. He also added that Waterco intended to expand its US factory to manufacture commercial filters for swimming pools within two years to match the growing demand in the country.

(The Star-18th July 2006)

CIMB to open investment bank branch in Sabah

[\(Top\)](#)

Commerce International Merchant Bankers (CIMB) Bhd will set up an investment banking branch in Sabah to take advantage of the State's booming economy. To be located at Jalan Sagunting in Kota Kinabalu's financial district, it is expected to be opened in September.

(New Straits Times-19th July 2006)

Bosch to open office in Malaysia, targets RM50m annual revenue

[\(Top\)](#)

BSH Bosch and Siemens Hausgerate GmbH (BSH), the world's third largest homeappliances company, will open its office in Malaysia on July 28 as part of its business expansion plans in the Asia-Pacific region. The office, located in Petaling Jaya, will be the group sixth in the region.

(New Straits Times-19th July 2006)

Diagonal shifts OHQ to KL

[\(Top\)](#)

Diagonal Consulting Sdn Bhd, a Britain-based business and technology consultancy company, has relocated its operational headquarters (OHQ) to Kuala Lumpur from Singapore. Global support and resources director Andy Hughes said Diagonal was the first consultancy company granted OHQ status in Malaysia. "We invested about RM2mil to establish the OHQ at the Petronas Twin Towers. The key reason to relocate was the 50% cheaper operational cost compared with Singapore, as well as the multilingual workforce which enables us to serve our global customers well," Hughes told a media briefing yesterday.

(The Star-20th July 2006)

UOB Malaysia opens two more branches

[\(Top\)](#)

United Overseas Bank (M) Bhd (UOB Malaysia) yesterday announced the opening of its 38th and 39th branches in Muar and Sibu respectively, making it the foreign bank with the largest branch network in the country. With these additions, UOB Malaysia will have 41 branches in the country by year-end. "We are also studying the option of opening more branches in non-urban areas in line with Bank Negara's latest policy to allow locally-incorporated foreign banks to branch into non-urban areas," UOB Malaysia chief executive officer Chan Kok Seong said

(The Star-21st July 2006)



Kulim, IOI to set up biodiesel plants in Johor

[\(Top\)](#)

Two firms have confirmed purchase of a 28ha land to set up biodiesel factories in the biofuel park in Tanjung Langsat, Johor, while another six have expressed their interest, says Johor Corp (JCorp) chief executive Tan Sri Muhammad Ali Hashim. The two firms which will set up their biodiesel factories are JCorp's subsidiary Kulim (Malaysia) Bhd and IOI Corp Bhd.

(New Straits Times-21st July 2006)

Citibank to open three more branches by year-end

[\(Top\)](#)

Citibank Bhd will open a branch in Puchong within a few weeks and two additional branches by year-end, bringing its total branch count to seven, said Citigroup country officer Piyush Gupta. "We opened our fourth branch in Bukit Tengah, Prai last month. We are waiting for Bank Negara's approval for the other two branches.

(The Star-21st July 2006)

Cheuk Nang to invest RM1bil in new centre

[\(Top\)](#)

Hong Kong Stock Exchange-listed Cheuk Nang (Holdings) Ltd, which is building a residential, retail and entertainment centre in the middle of the city, expects a 30% return on investment on the project once it is completed and its lots taken up. The area is in the vicinity of KLCC, and has been renamed the Cecil Chao Centre yesterday. Cheuk Nang founder and executive chairman Dr Cecil Chao said the company intended to invest RM1bil to develop over two million sq ft into luxury residential towers, a large shopping mall and an entertainment centre.

(The Star-22nd July 2006)

Govt plans US\$100m vaccine facilities in Nilai

[\(Top\)](#)

Malaysia, which aspires to become a global pharmaceutical and biotechnology player, plans to build its first US\$65 million (RM240 million) influenza vaccine manufacturing plant. The country will also see the birth of its first and the world's fourth systems biology centre dedicated to all sorts of vaccine research and development at a cost of US\$35 million (RM129 million). To be based in Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, both facilities will be owned by newly set up biotechnology firm Medusa Biotechnology Corp Sdn Bhd.

(New Straits Times-27th July 2006)

DHL to open 8 more ServicePoint outlets

[\(Top\)](#)

DHL, which recently opened two ServicePoint outlets in the Klang Valley, plans to expand with another eight over the next three years in key cities in Malaysia. DHL recently opened a ServicePoint outlet in SS2 in Petaling Jaya and Bangsar Baru in Kuala Lumpur. These outlets were launched last year with the opening of Malaysia's first DHL ServicePoint in Menara Axis.

(New Straits Times-27th July 2006)



RETAIL'S SECTION

December finish for Queensbay

[\(Top\)](#)

Queensbay Mall, formerly the proposed Bayan Mall project that was abandoned for eight years, will now be completed in December, seven months ahead of schedule. The mall will have more than 500 retail lots. Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said 75% of the outlets had been leased out to trusted brands, and that Jusco would be the anchor tenant

(The Star-1st July 2006)

Clark Hatch riding high on wave of fitness craze

[\(Top\)](#)

US-based fitness club operator Clark Hatch Fitness Centre is investing US\$800,000 (RM3 million) to open its 14th and largest centre in Johor to tap growing interest in fitness there. Set to open at the end of the year, the new fitness centre will occupy spaces of 20,000 sq ft in a Johor Bahru shopping mall.

(New Straits Times-3rd July 2006)

Penang megastore to boost HSL sales

[\(Top\)](#)

Electrical and electronics retailer Hock Sin Leong Group Bhd (HSL) expects RM 1 million in monthly sales with the opening of its latest lifestyle megastore in Penang. The megastores, branded as "HSL Circuit City", is located at the Island Plaza shopping complex in Tanjung Tokong, Penang.

(New Straits Times-7th July 2006)

Aeon wants to raise supermarket revenue

[\(Top\)](#)

Aeon Co (M) Bhd intends to have more Jusco J-One stores in the future. According to Chairman Datuk Abdulah Mohd Yusoff the company want to source for the right location with a lot of surrounding population. Aeon has invested RM5mil in the 34,000-sq-ft Jusco J-One store at Pearl Point in Jalan Klang Lama. The company plans to open department stores in Penang's Queensbay area and in Balakong this year. Aeon is also in talks to be the anchor tenant for a shopping centre in Sunway in 2007. The company also plans to build another department store in Bukit Tinggi, which would require an investment of RM100mil.

(The Star-8th July 2006)

Four strategies to boost Kamdar earnings

[\(Top\)](#)

Kamdar plans to open new stores in Putrajaya and Kuantan this year. These stores, with an investment of RM2mil and RM3mil respectively, are expected to start operation in August and September. The group is also eyeing outlets in Kuala Terengganu and Kuching. It had opened a store in Kota Baru at end-March costing about RM3mil. In April, the company launched Kamdar's loyalty programme membership card and it currently has 20,000 registered members. Kamdar had invested about RM1.7mil to revamp its Mid Valley Megamall outlet under the group's re-branding exercise. The store resumed operation in May.

(The Star-11st July 2006)



Convenience supermart opens

[\(Top\)](#)

Old Klang Road folk now have another supermarket in their neighbourhood with the opening of Jusco J-One Supermarket. Located within Pearl Point Shopping Mall off Jalan Kelang Lama, Kuala Lumpur, the supermarket offers daily necessities and sundry goods. The supermarket is the second outlet of AEON Co (M) Bhd's newest product, with the first such concept supermarket having opened in Damansara Damai, Petaling Jaya. AEON Co (M) Bhd Chairman Datuk Abdullah Mohd Yusof said although the supermarket was relatively small with only 34,000 sq ft, its opening was meaningful for the company to advance in a new direction.

(The Star-12nd July 2006)

Tomei to roll out franchising in 2007

[\(Top\)](#)

Jewellery maker Tomei Consolidated Bhd plans to roll out its franchising initiative by early next year. Tomei is now still talks with parties here and in Veitnam to form a franchising system. Currently Tomei has 39 retail outlets and a kiosk in Peninsular Malaysia. The company plans to have four more by the end of the year.

(New Straits Times-13rd July 2006)

Debenhams and Berjaya end pact

[\(Top\)](#)

UK's leading multi-category retailer Debenhams and Berjaya Group's BTS Department Store Sdn Bhd have mutually agreed to terminate their franchise agreement as the business has to be not viable. The outlet at Berjaya Times Square in Kuala Lumpur will close its door in mid-August.

(New Straits Times-13rd July 2006)

Metrojaya to open stores at Times Square

[\(Top\)](#)

Retailer Metrojaya Bhd will open its sixth department store in Berjaya Time square this October. The outlet, which will be branded as a Metrojaya, will take over the space vacated by Debenhams at the shopping centre. The retailer, which is looking at expanding its retail business, is in the process of negotiating for new outlets opening. By the end of the current financial year ending March 31 2007, the group hopes to have at least six department stores and 67 specialty outlets.

(New Straits Times-13th July 2006)

Starbucks to brings its brew to Sabah, Sarawak

[\(Top\)](#)

Berjaya Starbucks Coffee Co Sdn Bhd will be opening its first outlet in Sabah in November. Berjaya Starbucks senior manager of marketing and communications Sydney Quays said there would be more outlets opening before the end of the year, adding that one would in Juru, Penang and Malacca, the second outlet to be opened there.

(New Straits Times-13th July 2006)



French jeweller Chaumet opens boutique in KL

[\(Top\)](#)

French jeweller Chaumet, part of the luxury goods group LVMH Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton, has opened a boutique in Kuala Lumpur, its first in South-East Asia. Located in the Starhill shopping centre, the Chaumet boutique officially opened its doors last Wednesday. Chaumet president Thierry Fritsch said Malaysia has a big potential compared to the neighbouring countries because its stable economy and government. Without wanting to reveal its investment figures and sales target, Fritsch is optimistic to see return from the Kuala Lumpur outlet in two years.

(New Straits Times-15th July 2006)

Metrojaya to open in Avenue K

[\(Top\)](#)

Metrojaya Bhd plans to double the number of its department stores in the country to 10 within the next five years and is considering expanding in the Asean region in future, said chief executive officer Robert Heng. Kicking off its local expansion this year are two new outlets slated to open in Berjaya Times Square and Avenue K shopping mall. He added that Metrojaya targeted its Berjaya Times Square outlet to start operations at end-September or early October.

(The Star-15th July 2006)

Hypermarket licence freeze may be lifted year-end

[\(Top\)](#)

The five-year freeze imposed on new hypermarket licences in Kuala Lumpur, Shah Alam, Petaling Jaya, Johor Bahru and Penang may be lifted as early as end of this year. The freeze, which come into effect on 1 January 2004 and was to remain effective till-2009, was imposed to protect the small "mom and pop" stores and in response to the mushrooming number of hypermarkets. "The freeze is toward being lifted. There is no need for the freeze anymore as it was imposed because the market was said to be saturated," secretary-general of Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Datuk Seri Talaat Hussien said.

(New Straits Times-17th July 2006)

Sundry shops seek assistance

[\(Top\)](#)

Malaysia small sundry shop operators have come to accept that hypemarkets are here to stay but hope to receive support to sustain their business once the five-year freeze imposed on new hypermarkets licences is lifted. Dr Rosminah Mhd Roslin of University Technology Mara, who has headed over 50 studies on hypermarkets' impact on sundry shops in Malaysia, said that these small, independent retailers want the Government to continue to assist them in terms of monitoring the pricing structure and in-training to keep up with modernisation.

(New Straits Times-18th July 2006)

Popular enclave losing its charm

[\(Top\)](#)

Jalan Masjid India, popularly known as India Street in tourism brochures, has long been known as Kuala Lumpur's oldest shopping hub. It is a popular enclave for Indian food, jewellery, spices and textiles and Indian music. DBKL has upgraded the street last year to create a more conducive retail environment in the location. However, if one were to visit the street today, there is something very different about the area, as it seems to be missing a vital element that used to make it a popular shopping hub.

(The Star-18th July 2006)



Melaka's largest shopping mall opens August

[\(Top\)](#)

Dataran Pahlawan Melaka Megamall, touted as the largest shopping centre in the state, will be opened officially next month. Jimmy Tham, development director of McAlister Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd, the project development manager, says "It is nearing completion; only some finished; landscaping and external works remain to be done. Some zones have been handed over last month and the rest will be handed over in the middle of this month for the fitting out period. The official opening is on Aug 30, just before national day." Built on 19 acres leasehold land along Jalan Merdeka, Dataran Pahlawan will have a gross area of 1.5 million sq ft and house over 600 retail lots with built-ups ranging from 120 to 3,500 sq ft. with a total nett retail areas of 700,000 sq ft, Dataran pahlawan is positioned as a retail attraction cum tourist hub in the southern region. The shopping mall will be grouped into different zones to enhance shoppers' convenience so that goods and services are easily identified.

(New Straits Times-18th July 2006)

Expansion to boost Sunway Pyramid

[\(Top\)](#)

The RM550mil expansion plan of Sunway Pyramid Shopping Complex will increase the existing built-up area of 2.5 million sq ft by 60% to four million sq ft. The total net lettable area is 1.7 million sq ft. The number of retail outlets will also grow to 800 from 300 now. Sunway City Bhd property investment managing director Ngeow Voon Yean added that the expansion cost included RM25mil for an additional infrastructure link from the New Pantai Expressway and RM50mil to refurbish the existing mall. "In the near future, our dedicated Sunway Monorail circuit will be linked up to the Komuter line at Setia Jaya (to be renamed Sunway) station," he said. The mall extension will introduce four precincts for shoppers, known as Fashion Central, Oasis Boulevard, Asian Avenue and Marrakesh, each with distinct colours, cultures and products from well-known shopping zones around the world. The expansion architecture will reflect a contemporary retail design with elements that echo the prevailing Egyptian theme.

(The Star-21st July 2006)

Aeon targets RM80m sales from new complex

[\(Top\)](#)

Jusco department store and supermarket chain operator Aeon Co (M) Bhd is targeting RM80mil in annual revenue from its newly-opened shopping complex in Equine Park here. Aeon finance general manager Poh Ying Loo said the company had invested RM70mil to build the complex that housed 75 shops and restaurants, and the Jusco department store and supermarket. The company had opened at least two outlets yearly since 2002 and allocated some RM150mil for annual capital expenditure on outlets expansion, he said. Next year, it plans to open at least two new stores, including one each in Penang and Bandar Sunway. Aeon currently operates 14 Jusco stores and two Jusco J-One supermarkets nationwide.

(The Star-22nd July 2006)

RM18m expansion plan for Central Market

[\(Top\)](#)

Central Market Sdn Bhd, operator of the 118-year-old Central Market in Kuala Lumpur, plans to invest RM18 million to expand and renovate the land surrounding the building. Central Market managing director Bernard Bong Yam Keong said RM10 million will be used to build a riverside food haven street and another RM8 million for a pedestrian mall at Jalan Hang Kasturi. The pedestrian mall is expected to be completed by early 2007, while the riverside F&B Street is expected to be completed in 12 months upon receiving the approval from the authorities.

(New Straits Times-25th July 2006)



Luca's Pizza on expansion spree

[\(Top\)](#)

Luca's Pizza, a newcomer to the local fast-food pizza joint, is on an expansion spree with 15 new outlets in Malaysia planned over the next two years. It opened its first outlet in Subang Jaya, Selangor, on June 16. Co-owner and director Luca Maitan said about RM 5 million will be invested in the 15 outlets, which will be opened at strategic locations such as shopping malls in the cities. Four outlets will be opened this year, of which one will be located at the Alamanda shopping mall in Putrajaya next month, while another in Klang. Maitan said he is looking for another two locations for the other two outlets this year. The company is currently in discussion with a few shopping complexes in the Klang Valley such as MidValley, 1 Utama and Sunway Pyramid.

(New Straits Times-25th July 2006)

Berjaya Times Square sees occupancy surge

[\(Top\)](#)

Berjaya Times Square shopping complex in Kuala Lumpur expects to see its highest occupancy and patronage level since its opening three years ago. Tenant occupancy is expected to hit 85 per cent this year, while patronage level is projected to increase by about 40 per cent. The shopping complex's more established presence in the market, better tenant mix and easier to access is expected to spur the growth.

(New Straits Times-26th July 2006)

Dr Mahathir and Motoko in bread-making venture

[\(Top\)](#)

The former Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, via M&M Consolidated Resources Sdn Bhd, a 51:49 joint venture with Motoko Resources Sdn Bhd, is setting up a bakery-cum-restaurant in Langkawi that aims to produce high-quality bakery products and pastries served a la fine dining. The RM3mil bakery, called The Loaf, is located at Telaga Harbour Park. It will be launched on Saturday. He said in two to three years, the company would be looking at opening more outlets or expanding via franchising in high-class resorts in Phuket, Bali, Kuala Lumpur and Singapore. Ultimately, it plans to have outlets or franchisees in Tokyo, London and New York, offering bakery products that are as good as those offered in these cities.

(The Star-27th July 2006)

New Malacca mall set to be ICT hub

[\(Top\)](#)

Digital Domain, soon to open in Malacca's newest shopping mall, Dataran Pahlawan, is expected to be southern peninsula's biggest information and communications technology (ICT) sales and service hub. Jimmy Tham, development director of McAlister Holdings (M) Sdn Bhd, which is managing the development of Dataran Pahlawan said Dataran Pahlawan had been conceptualised to be the new shopping icon of Malacca and elevate shopping in the state to a higher level.

(The Star-27th July 2006)



KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Residents fume over ponds

[\(Top\)](#)

Residents of Taman Cheras Indah have been putting up with the stench from an uncovered oxidation pond for years and now have to brace for more when three more oxidation ponds are completed within the year. Once the new project is complete, the housing area will be sandwiched between the two sewerage plants and there will be no escape from the odour. Kampung Batu 9 Cheras Village Security and Development Committee chairman Ho Ah Seng, who is acting on behalf of the residents, said the oxidation pond project was too close to the homes and the realignment of the existing drainage system had also narrowed the road running parallel to it.

(The Star-1st July 2006)

Link road a welcome change for some folk

[\(Top\)](#)

Residents of Taman Puncak Jalil in Seri Kembangan are a happy lot. The reason for their pleasure is a link road that cuts through Bandar Kinrara. Opened on July 1 by Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ), the link serves as an easy access for Puncak Jalil residents who are on their way to Kuala Lumpur. After three months, a permanent access road would have been ready for use.

(The Star-6th July 2006)

Ideal place now an ideal dump

[\(Top\)](#)

Residents of Skyline Garden, one of the smallest neighbourhoods in Jalan Kelang Lama, have been enjoying their stay in the quiet and peaceful area for years. They live away from the main road's hustle and bustle. Strangely, it is these reasons that have caused them problems. Irresponsible people have found the hidden neighbourhood an ideal spot to dump rubbish. And, the authorities find it too small a place to waste time on.

(The Star-6th July 2006)

Floods strike for fourth time

[\(Top\)](#)

Floods hit Taman Suria Jaya in Cheras again for the fourth time this year. The June 21 incident on June 21 was deemed the worst ever by residents and businessmen in the housing and commercial area near Phoenix Plaza. Around 11 businesses in the light industrial area were affected when muddy waters measuring about 0.6m deep flowed into the shops. Houses located on the lower level were also badly affected.

(The Star-6th July 2006)



Making Batu Uban more liveable

[\(Top\)](#)

Batu Uban is surely one of the most well-developed places on Penang island. Almost all facilities, from hotels to shopping malls, are available. Its assemblyman Goh Kheng Sneah said indeed his constituency should be a most liveable area but still he has been facing many urban problems that might seemed minor but are actually tough to solve. "One of the crucial problems here is the traffic and lack of parking space," he said. Another matter troubling Goh is the increasing crime rate in his area.

(The Star-10th July 2006)

Buyers of shoplots irked over delay

[\(Top\)](#)

Some 50 buyers of shoplots met up at a project site here to demand immediate delivery of their investments. It has been 10 years since they inked the sale and purchase agreement but they have yet to take delivery of their double-storey shoplot units situated in the city. Perak MCA Public Services and Complaints Bureau deputy chief Datuk Lee Kon Yin said he had met the developer but failed to get any response. The buyers had signed a sale and purchase agreement in November 1996 for the units, which were to be completed within 33 months. In May, a spokesman for the developer's office was quoted as saying that the 230 units of shoplots were not abandoned and that they were almost completed.

(The Star-10th July 2006)

Residents worried about rise in crime

[\(Top\)](#)

Lunas residents have asked for more police surveillance to check crime in the area. They complained that snatch theft is on the increase and that they dared not leave their houses for too long, fearing that burglars would target them. Lunas assemblyman S. Ganeson advised residents not to solely rely on police in fighting against crime. Kulim OCPD Supt Abdul Majid Ha-shim assured residents that the police would increase their patrols in the area.

(The Star-11st July 2006)

Rate increase for Kajang

[\(Top\)](#)

The new assessment rates for the Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj) are in the process of being gazetted, its president Zainal Abidin Arshad said, adding that the new rates had been approved by the state government. He said the legal department was currently going through details on the increase in assessment and the percentage of the increase would only be made known after the rates had been gazetted. The new assessment rates will take effect from 2007.

(The Star-12nd July 2006)



Remnants pose danger to road users and villagers

[\(Top\)](#)

It has been two weeks since PJ Utara MP Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun put a stop to a billboard project on a riverbank near the LDP highway, but its remnants remain and the slopes are now dangerously exposed. The site, which is at the junction of Jalan SS25/29, is reserve land and it belongs to the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID). A landslide had occurred at the vicinity on May 26.

(The Star-13th July 2006)

Owners paid RM4m, Land Office got none

[\(Top\)](#)

For 13 years, more than 400 factory owners in Taman Industri Subang faithfully paid quit rent to the developer for the area. To their shock recently, the RM4mil was never forwarded to the Petaling District Land Office. To add salt to the wound, the factory owners also discovered that the amount was three times more than the regular quit rent charged for light industry lots in the area. Besides the quit rent issue, factory owners were also annoyed with the developer for building sub-standard lots. They said some of the lots were uneven due to soil settlement because Taman Industry Subang was formerly a mining pond.

(The Star-13rd July 2006)

Problems abound for folks at condo

[\(Top\)](#)

Golden Villa condo and apartment residents in Kampung Jawa, Klang, are unhappy with the developer over several issues, including non-issuance of CF and lack of maintenance. The residents were issued vacant possession (VP) notice in October 2003 even though the premises did not have water and electricity supply or lifts. The residents moved into their homes in July 2004, yet most still have not received Certificates of Fitness from the Klang Municipal Council (MPK). Out of the seven blocks in the area, only the low-cost apartments in Block G were issued with VP and CF, while the other 800 condo and apartment units have only received VP notices.

(The Star-16th July 2006)

Najib lauds Westports' Zero Poverty Programme

[\(Top\)](#)

Westports Malaysia's "Zero Poverty Programme" in Pulau Indah will continue to provide a helping hand to the needy whose are currently living in poverty. Westports has embarked on a mission to alleviate poverty among Pulau Indah's rural folks. Over the years, the port has contributed over RM1 million for various projects that have brought significant changes to the lives of the island residents.

(New Straits Times-17th July 2006)



Trying to dump town's image

[\(Top\)](#)

While most of us can heave a sigh of relief when the garbage truck has finished its rounds in our neighbourhood, the people of Batang Berjuntai can only hope that fresh air will return to their town one day. The 5,000-odd residents are forced to breathe the foul air emanating from a nearby dump and their anxiety mounts as the pile of rotting rubbish keeps growing.

(The Star-24th July 2006)

Penang Port out to rectify problems

[\(Top\)](#)

Almost all the 102 berths in the RM44mil Tanjung City Marina are empty and the Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB) has blamed the situation on poor publicity and dredging problems. PPSB is managing the public marina, which is the first and only marina in the country located in the city.

(The Star-30th July 2006)

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