



### ROAD CLOSURES

The long term lane closures along Persiaran Apec, Cyberjaya for a stretch of 600m from today to Nov 22 will take place from 8am to 5pm (weekdays) and 8am to 1pm (Saturdays) in stages. In Stage One, the left lane along Persiaran Apec (both bounds) will be closed for road widening works. In Stage Two, the right lane along Persiaran Apec (both ways) will be closed. There will also be a permanent closure of the right turning to Kuala Lumpur/Puchong from Persiaran Harmoni. Motorists from Persiaran Harmoni will only be able to turn left and make the U-turn in front of Lim Kok Wing University to go to Kuala Lumpur or Puchong. The U-turn will be made available upon completion of Stage One works.

### MOBILE COUNTERS

The Shah Alam On Wheels will be operating at the parking lot of Tesco Setia Alam, Section U13, Shah Alam, on July 15, 11am to 5pm. Public can pay and check their assessment fees, parking compounds as well as purchase parking coupons and lodge complaints. For details, visit [www.mbsa.gov.my](http://www.mbsa.gov.my)

### FUN WITH 988

988 DJs and crew will organise #988 City 2.0 at Main Atrium, Ground Floor, Sunway Velocity Mall, Kuala Lumpur from today to July 16, 10am to 10pm. Activities include amusement arcade-style games, giant toy blocks, 3D 'Dance for Fun' and Virtual Reality games. The main highlight of #988 City features a LED DJ booth where fans and listeners can meet and play interactive games with their favourite 988 DJs. Members of the public stand a chance to win prizes by completing this series of games. To register, pick up a '988 Passport' at the registration counter.

### FREE TALK

A talk titled 'Malaysia-US-China Relations under the Najib, Trump and Xi Administrations: Implications for Malaysia's GE14' will be held at KAG01, KA Block, UTAR Sungai Long Campus on July 19 from 2pm to 4pm. Asean Studies Initiative Director and American University School of International Service's Dr Heng Pek Koon will be examining the evolving relationship between Malaysia and the US under the Obama and Trump Administration and between Malaysia and China under the Xi Administration. For details call 03-9086 0288 ext 875 or email [tany@utar.edu.my](mailto:tany@utar.edu.my).

### LA SALLE FUNDRAISER

SMK La Salle Klang Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) is organising a charity breakfast on July 29 from 8.30am at the school. The charity event aims to revive the school military band, improve and upgrade learning and sports facilities and build a financially stable PTA. Tickets are priced at RM30 and can be purchased at the school office. For details, call 012-389 2930 (K. Jayandra) or 012-901 6608 (S. L. Wong).

### FREE YOGA CLASS

BKS Iyengar Yogashala Malaysia invites members of the public to a free yoga class on July 15 and July 29 at 41-2, Jalan 109E, Desa Business Park, Taman Desa, Jalan Kelang Lama, Kuala Lumpur (opposite Taman Desa Medical Centre). There will be two sessions for each date. Participants are only allowed to join one session. Each class is limited to 30 students. Pre-registration is required. For details, call 03-7982 9979, 012-320 4115 or visit [www.facebook.com/bksiyogashala/](http://www.facebook.com/bksiyogashala/)

### COUNSELLING WORKSHOP

The Buddhist GEM Fellowship will organise a counselling workshop of Healing Hearts and Healing Minds on July 23, 9am to 5pm at BGF Centre, No.D-G-2, Block D, Jalan PJU 1A/3K, Ara Damansara, Petaling Jaya. Registration is RM30 for students and RM50 for adults. For details, call 012-223 3402 (Yoon Kin), or 013-3312780 (Alex)



Akmal's love affair with cycling began in university and has grown in leaps and bounds since with the next mission aimed at spreading the love and knowledge of bicycles with underprivileged children and expand the culture throughout Malaysia. — RICKY LAI/The Star

## Spreading love of cycling by making it easily accessible

By YVONNE NATHAN  
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WHILE local councils pick up the pace to develop a better environment for cycling enthusiasts, cyclists have pitched in to cultivate the cycling practice in Kuala Lumpur.

These enthusiasts are also finding new routes to get to various destinations without having to go through the everyday traffic congestion around the city.

Over five years' worth of dedication had been put into creating and updating a map that shows a sight of Kuala Lumpur rarely seen – through cycling routes.

Cycling Kuala Lumpur Bicycle Map project coordinator Jeffrey Lim started out the project with a number of volunteers and a focus on advancing the capital city as a model for other cities in Malaysia to follow.

Before breaking into photography with a customised Kanta-Box camera using salvaged pieces of scrap materials, Lim shared his very specific knowledge of cycling with Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

"Park connectors are now an agenda in DBKL under their five-year master plan.

"Improvements to the embankment areas with the River of Life project will eventually provide an additional 10km of seamless walkways, which can include lanes for cycling," he said.

Finding ways around issues of scarcity in land area and ever-evolving cityscape, the map covers 110 sq km of the city centre and surrounding suburbs as well as 7km of lanes shared with pedestrians within the city in pursuit of charting out suitable landscapes for cyclists.

"We started by mapping out the city, collecting data with volunteer cyclists to develop an aspirational map," he said on the possibility of turning the routes into lanes.

These routes show nine key entry points into the city centre including parts of Bandar Utama in Petaling Jaya, Taman Tun Dr Ismail, Mont Kiara, Bandar Baru Sentul, Seputeh, Titiwangsa, Chan Sow Lin, Kampung Pandan and Dato Keramat to name a few. The trails used a combination of main roads, less crowded roads, motor-cycle lanes as well as routes parallel to rivers.

"Rivers always act as borders because people are not allowed to build anything too close to them, yet the riverbanks are the flattest lying land areas, which are perfect for cycling.

"Among them are the east and south entry points through Sungai Klang, north using Sungai Gombak, north west with Sungai Batu, as well as the northern route through Jalan Pahang and north east with Jalan Semarak that is still accessible because it is less busy.

"There are a few hidden places or 'lost rivers' we discovered and documented as routes along the way such as Sungai Anak Air Batu.

Lim suggested planting additional trees along routes for shade as opposed to spending money building covered overhead walkways or lanes.

However, he believed that the best starting point to nurture the cycling culture would be in the suburbs or self-contained new villages such as Kampung Baru and Kampung Keramat.

"It is human behaviour and our mindsets that require change through education, public



Lim has been lending his expertise in mapping out cycling routes to DBKL to make the city friendly for cyclists. — AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star

engagement and building a sense of community and ownership, or belonging, so people can value the space given.

Taking concrete steps towards this end is another avid cyclist, Akmal Azfar, who was consumed by the passion since his student days in Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM).

He started off taking the bus to his classes but later realised that the 3km route that took him 30 to 45 minutes by bus, could be covered in 10 minutes by cycling.

"From there I wanted to get other students cycle to class and by the end of my first year in mid-2008, there were enough of us to set up a small bicycle centre.

"After that, I worked on an academic paper using a pilot study of a tour around Malaysia with 40 people.

"What I found important to encourage others to cycle is road safety and by measuring cycling knowledge to improve people's confidence in cycling," said Akmal, who then pushed for UPM to build cycling lanes and give students rebates for getting bicycles.

In 2015, Akmal founded The Basikal – a café and workshop as a checkpoint in tour cycling routes.

He is now heading a "Know One Teach One" Workshop, with a grant by AirAsia Foundation, from January this year to December 2018 to empower underprivileged youths with the know-how on fixing bicycles.

"Teenagers often come to a point where they feel lost in life and for me, cycling helped clear my mind and till today, it is one the best times for me to think.

"People in the city are often separated by fences, walls and getting stressed stuck in traffic jams. Cycling removes all that obstacles and keeps things simple.

"It becomes an opportunity to meet new people, relax and share something to be enjoyed together," he said.

He advised new cyclists to choose routes and lesser used roads and commute during non-peak hours of 5am to 9am and after 5pm to avoid heavy traffic and hot weather.

Nevertheless, he warns of putting the cart before the horse by developing facilities that may further add to existing white elephants scattered around the city.