

NCBM OUTREACH



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VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT OF NCBM

To ensure blind people will receive appropriate training and enjoy quality services regardless of where they live in the country.



SUPPORT OUR CAUSE

The National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) provides a vital link between the organisations serving the blind in this country by acting as the national coordinating body. Through NCBM, the organisations for and of the blind have a channel to discuss and formulate national policies and plans and to pioneer new programmes for the benefit of the blind and vision-impaired.

It cost the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia RM 30,000.00 a year to produce both print and Braille.

Your financial support will, therefore, go a long way in helping to bring about new developments and progress for the blind. All contributions are deeply appreciated.

Donations should be made in the name of :

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|----|
| Vision And Mission Statement Of NCBM | 2 |
| Support Our Cause | 2 |
| Announcements | 4 |
| Editorial Board | 5 |
| Special Announcement | 5 |
| A Touch Of New Breath For NCBM | 6 |
| <i>by Jasmine Khoo</i> | |
| Message From National Council For The Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) | 8 |
| The United Nations General Assembly Has Adopted The World Blind Union's Resolution Affirming World Braille Day. | 10 |
| Asean Enabling Masterplan Mainstreaming Rights Of Persons With Disabilities 2025 Launched! | 13 |
| <i>by Wong Yoon Loong</i> | |
| International Council For Education Of People With Visual Impairment (Icevi) - East Asia Regional Conference Held On 16-18 October 2018 At Novotel Manila Araneta Center, Philippines | 15 |
| <i>by Wong Yoon Loong</i> | |
| News From NCBM And Member-Organisations | 17 |
| Providing Personal Assistance To Blind Persons With Multiple Disabilities | 25 |
| <i>by Moses Choo Siew Cheong</i> | |
| Discovery Exploration Walk To Mid-Valley Mall | 29 |
| <i>by Dr. Tan Tok Shiong</i> | |
| My Journey In Education Through Monash University, Kuala Lumpur | 31 |
| <i>by Ruth Yong Wan Theen</i> | |
| Technology Update: A New Choice In Braille Transcription Software | 34 |
| <i>by Moses Choo Siew Cheong</i> | |
| A Point To Ponder: Stop Look Go! | 35 |
| <i>by Wong Kow</i> | |
| Sun Tsu's Art Of War - The Malaysian Experience | 38 |
| <i>by Ooi Hock Tiam</i> | |
| Some Humorous Tidbits | 41 |
| Reflections | 42 |
| Unknown Author-On The Problems In Life: Some Quotations | 43 |
| Principal Office-Bearers And Council Members Of NCBM For 2018 - 2020 | 45 |
| Chairpersons Of Committees Of NCBM For 2018- 2020 | 46 |
| Auditor 2018- 2020 | 46 |
| Representatives Of NCBM To Other Organisations, 2018- 2020 | 46 |
| Earn Some Extra Cash | 47 |
| Notes | 48 |

The views expressed in this publication are those of the author/contributor and do not necessarily represent the views of NCBM.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

NCBM'S SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR THE BLIND

1. NCBM's Job Pioneering Scheme

This scheme was launched in 2012 whereby NCBM collaborates with prospective employers in providing employment opportunities for the blind. The blind person will work for a period of three to six months and be paid a monthly allowance of RM1,200 by NCBM. At the end of the period, it is hoped that the employer will be convinced of the blind person's capabilities and give him permanent employment.

Please contact the NCBM secretariat for the application form. Tel. 03-20281999.

2. Equipment Loan Fund for the Blind

NCBM would like to see significant improvement in job opportunities for the blind in Malaysia. Therefore, blind persons in employment who face the difficulty in obtaining adaptive equipment to help them in their work can get in touch with NCBM for such assistance.

For more details, please call the NCBM secretariat at 03-2028 1999.

3. Research Grant

Anybody, blind or sighted, interested in carrying out research on employment for the blind or on blindness prevention can make application to NCBM for a research grant. The amount to be provided can range from RM3,000 to RM5,000.

Please contact NCBM at 03-2028 1999

Note:

For more details concerning these projects and for the application form, you can contact the NCBM Secretariat.

Tel: 03-2028 1999

Email: info@ncbm.org.my

Contact person : administrative assistant



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

ARTICLES FOR THE MAGAZINE

Readers are reminded that their contribution of articles, suggestions, poems and jokes are most welcome for inclusion in NCBM Outreach.

Please note that it would be helpful to the editor if such contributions could be submitted on a thumb drive or similar mode or in Braille. If the article is in Braille, it should be on single-sided pages in order to facilitate editing.

You should include your full name (as in the Identity Card) with your address, telephone number and bank account number so that the money can be banked into your account.

For details concerning payments, please see the last page.

Moses Choo Siew Cheong

Wong Yoon Loong

Wong Kwee Heong

Chin Yew Cheng

A TOUCH OF NEW BREATH FOR NCBM

By Jasmine Khoo

Editor's Note: Mdm. Jasmine Khoo has held the Presidency of the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM) for three terms, totalling a period of six years from 2012 to 2018. She made her parting speech at the Annual General Meeting of NCBM on August 3rd, 2018.



Here is her message:

To all my Fellow Council Members, Chairpersons of committees, and Representatives from the Ministries,

Let me begin by thanking everyone for the cooperation given over the past six years of my presidency. Reflecting back, I have indeed been the President of NCBM for the last six years or for three terms.

During my tenure, we have seen NCBM growing in terms of owning assets and financially. It is certainly my hope that this positive trend of growth will continue for NCBM in the coming years.

Although I am relinquishing my position as President of NCBM, the fact that I am still holding a key position in the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) will mean that I shall still be able to render assistance and support to NCBM.

I believe that NCBM, in playing its role as coordinator among the five member-organisations, will need to transform in order to meet new challenges for the next few years. Known to be one of the leaders in the production of braille for many years, I see that NCBM will now have to lead in the area of introducing new technologies.

The focus of NCBM will be on the training of trainers as well as assisting in the promotion of the right and affordable assistive equipment for the blind individual. Follow-up work should be taken on by the member-organisations in promoting such equipment and solutions to the blind individuals. Member-organisations must play the complementary rather than competing role to NCBM.

In yet another area where we need to work as a team is in the preparation of blind persons to take on the role as experts in accessibility auditing, disability equality training and disability-related services training. Presently, I believe that there are only a handful of such people who are helping to bring about awareness among the corporations to understand the plight being faced by the blind and visually impaired. Member-organisations must work together with NCBM in order to ensure that we have an adequate number of such experts around the country.

In fact, for the moment as our number of blindness experts are rather small, it would certainly make sense for us to be moving together in order for us to see better results. To my mind, it is more important for us to be serving the blind than to look at the blindness community as a means of reaping business opportunities.

After all, the general public has already been very supportive of our work. I am very sure this is the reason why we have been around for so many years.

Thank you.



MESSAGE FROM NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND, MALAYSIA (NCBM)

Save a Spot for the Disabled in the Parking Lots

The Local Councils are being urged to create priority parking spots for the groups with mobility problems, blind, deaf, pregnant women and the elderly. Indeed, the blind really do face many obstacles in the parking lots and we do need to be given priority.

Under the current disabled regulations set by a number of Local Councils, the blind are not entitled to getting parking stickers. In the light of this, we hope that the Local Councils will at least provide more priority parking bays for the convenience of their carers or their partners.

The Penang City Council (MBPP), Seberang Prai Council (MPSP), Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ) and the Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) do provide OKU stickers to those with OKU cards and who are registered with the State Welfare Department. However, only certain groups can qualify to be given stickers.

Why are stickers not given to the blind? The reason given is that the blind do not drive. In the case of a blind person being accompanied by a carer, they should be able to park in specially allotted parking.

Mr. Yam Tong Woo, who is blind and a member of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB), says, "Ideally, all holders of the disability card (which is recognised by the Government) should be provided with the OKU parking stickers by the Local Councils. The plight of the blind, in particular, has been overlooked because they only ride along with family members or friends who are the actual car-drivers. However, when the person who is driving the car has to park far away from our destination, then the walk over some distance could be quite hazardous for us, especially if it is a busy road and the path may be full of obstacles."

NCBM is very happy and grateful that now the authorities are much more receptive and that they even welcome the idea of special parking bays for all disabled people. For example, YB Senator Bathmavathi Krishnan (who is herself disabled) has said that she is in favour of having priority parking bays for a wider scope of disabled persons as well as for those with temporary physical disabilities.

Senator Bathmavathi says, "The local authorities and the mall owners can allocate priority parking for the blind, deaf, speech impaired, people with temporary disability such as a broken leg as well as pregnant women. The requirement is for the disabled to display a copy of their disability card on the vehicle dash-board for the security guards to see. The idea ultimately is to provide for a safer and inclusive society."

The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) Head of Corporate & Public Relations En. Shahrin Ahmad, said, "We give priority to the physically disabled to park at the OKU parking bays. However, all those with the OKU card issued by the State Welfare Department can apply for the stickers.

Both the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and the Putrajaya Corporation do not provide OKU stickers. Nonetheless, they do require that all buildings and new developments allocate parking bays for the disabled.

All in all, we can say that the future of the disabled in Malaysia look bright regarding access to public amenities and facilities. Let us go forward together in bringing about a better place for the disabled in Malaysia.



THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY HAS ADOPTED THE WORLD BLIND UNION'S RESOLUTION AFFIRMING WORLD BRAILLE DAY.

The purpose of the World Braille Day, celebrated every January 4, is to raise awareness of the importance of braille to converting the written word to tactile form for the benefit of blind and partially sighted persons worldwide.

WBU members and partners around the world have reacted with excitement upon receiving the news.

"This is a wonderful achievement especially because braille is the means of literacy for blind people. Literacy is the foundation of education and foundation of full integration of employment' says WBU's President Dr. Fred Schroeder. Watch his full remarks on WBU YouTube Channel https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=29&v=uWwwLjBiG80

"In United States braille has come to be recognised as an important item because if we can read and write, we can fully participate in all the activities in life that everybody else takes for granted, says Former President of the National Federation of the Blind-USA, Mr. Marc Maurer. Watch his full remarks on WBU YouTube Channel: <https://youtu.be/5YrrqwbAkIM>

From Rwanda, the WBU Second Vice President Ms. Donatilla Kanimba, said "This is a great opportunity to advocate for braille as the most important literacy tool for the blind community, especially children here in Africa who cannot pursue education because they cannot access braille for their literacy needs. "As the World Blind Union, we believe that reading is a human right and therefore we are grateful that the UN is recognizing this right. We urge governments to recognize this right as well and provide braille literacy in schools".

WBU Honorary Life Member and Former CEO, Dr. Penny Hartin, says "This is great news indeed! It is wonderful that the UN has recognized the importance of braille. There have been few innovations that have made a

more significant impact on the lives of persons with disabilities than the invention of braille. It has continued to bring independence, literacy and empowerment to millions of blind people worldwide. Unlike modern technology, which is too expensive for the majority of blind people around the world, braille can be written and read with the simplest of tools available and useable anywhere despite economic, geographic and linguistic barriers."

Ms. Martine Abel-Williamson, the WBU Treasurer from New Zealand, says "This is great news! Braille is so every day – it's on key rings, coffee mugs and fridge magnets and in recipes, diaries and on tubes of skin moisturizer; yet, it also creeps into special occasions, being present in restaurant menus and on wine bottles', says. "Braille enables us to keep in touch, to relate hands-on with the printed word and this in itself may be a touching experience. But in the end, it is us who have to interact with Braille. It is up to us to keep on connecting the dots, drawing the characters through into meaningful words – for it is the only true equivalent to print. Braille is our touch stone to literacy."

Ms. Diane Bergeron, Vice-President, Engagement and International Affairs for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind (CNIB), says "It is wonderful that World Braille Day has been acknowledged by the UN and will be commemorated on the birthday of Louis Braille who provided blind and partially sighted persons with a means to access the printed world. Literacy is important for everyone and people with sight loss are no different. Braille equals literacy and opens the doors for opportunities in education and employment. It allows us the chance to reach our goals and make our dreams come true."

WBU Secretary General Mr. Ajai Kummar Mittal, from India, says "Continuous braille reading holds the key to learning good spelling. Also, Braille is essential for subjects requiring intensive study, like mathematics, science, geography, grammar, semantics, phonetics etc. These are just a few examples to show how critical Braille is for us. Braille will remain the doyen of systems for giving to the visually impaired access to knowledge which is the main source of empowerment."

The Resolution will be posted on the UN website: www.un.org<<http://www.un.org>> as well as the WBU website. WBU will also issue a statement to commemorate the World Braille Day.

We encourage all our members to share their comments on WBU Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BlindUnion/>,
Twitter <https://twitter.com/BlindUnion> and
YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3yNe9BFSSRUbts1YJALuA>

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BlindUnion<<https://www.facebook.com/BlindUnion/>> ‘Changing
What It Means to be Blind’



ASEAN ENABLING MASTERPLAN MAINSTREAMING RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES 2025 LAUNCHED!

*By Wong Yoon Loong,
Manager, Centre for Advocacy, Research and Empowerment, NCBM*

On November 15, 2018, the leaders of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states approved the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at the 33rd ASEAN Summit in Singapore. Thailand has been a strong champion and facilitator of the Masterplan from its inception and throughout the drafting process. The launch of the Masterplan in Bangkok, on 3 December 2018 in conjunction with the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, marks this contribution and Thailand's ongoing commitment to the next critical phase: making the plan a living document with clear progress in implementation to be achieved during Thailand's 2019 chairmanship of ASEAN.

With the aim of respecting, protecting, and fulfilling the human rights of persons with disabilities in all areas of life, the Masterplan proposes 76 priority action points spanning political, legal, economic, social and cultural, and environmental matters. The action points are distributed across the three regional development Blueprints of ASEAN's Community Vision 2025: Social-Cultural, Economic and Political-Security. The Masterplan recognizes persons with disabilities as agents of change, empowered to make decisions about their own lives, participate actively, and seek services, in accordance with the human rights principles enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which all ten ASEAN member states have ratified.

The Masterplan is ASEAN's first regional action plan for mainstreaming the rights of persons with disabilities. It was crafted by members of an inter-divisional ASEAN Task Force that was co-chaired by the ASEAN Intergovernmental Commission on Human Rights (AICHR) and the Senior Officials Meeting on Social Welfare and Development (SOMSWD). The Task Force also included representatives from the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC).

A hallmark of the Masterplan was the inclusive and consultative drafting process. The Task Force ensured feedback and ownership from disabled people's organizations (DPOs) across all ten ASEAN member states. The General Election Network for Disability Access (AGENDA), through grant funding provided by Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), supported DPO coordination meetings to gather feedback and develop recommendations to be shared with the Task Force.

The Masterplan is expected to significantly contribute to disability inclusive development across the region by translating human rights commitments into development actions. Masterplan implementation begins in 2019 under Thailand's chairmanship of ASEAN. In keeping with its leadership and facilitation approach to date, Thailand is expected to pursue a multi-pronged strategy to advance implementation that will include advocacy, dialogue, mobilization of resources, capacity building, and strategic partnerships. Foremost, Thailand is expected to sustain the creative collaboration between ASEAN officials and regional networks of disabled people's organizations that shaped the drafting of the document. It is an approach that embodies the disability rights motto: "Nothing about us without us." As H.E. Dr. Seree Nonthasoot, Representative of Thailand to AICHR, stated: "We hope that by having this ASEAN Enabling Masterplan, it will be a focal document for ASEAN to bridge the gaps, to destroy the barriers for persons with disabilities."

The full text of the Masterplan can be accessed through ASEAN's website.



INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL FOR EDUCATION OF PEOPLE WITH VISUAL IMPAIRMENT (ICEVI) -EAST ASIA REGIONAL CONFERENCE HELD ON 16-18 OCTOBER 2018 AT NOVOTEL MANILA ARANETA CENTER, PHILIPPINES

By Wong Yoon Loong

The Theme : Right-based Education and Sustainable Goals for Persons with Visual Impairment.

The topics discussed were :-

- » UNCRPD and Incheon Strategies in the Light of SDGs in the ASEAN Perspective
- » Inclusion, Assistance and Support Services: Progress and Prospects Human Resource and Development Program for Competence and
- » Transition Approaches Leading to career Development in Higher , Technical and Vocational Education
- » Appropriate and effective Assistive Devices for the Education of Persons with Visual Impairment and Multi-handicapping Conditions

Some of the Quezon City Declaration on sustainable Development Goal on Inclusive Education for Persons with Visual Impairment and multiple Disabilities with Visual Impairment were :-

1. Ensure physical accessibility in all education institutions, public and private to ensure safe, age-appropriate, accessible learning environments;
2. Implement effective transition programs for early intervention, basic education, tertiary and vocational/technical education including community based programs for persons with visual impairment and multiple disabilities with visual impairment;

3. Upgrade teachers skills, curriculum development and support services through various strategies and platforms like online teaching;
4. Ensure that curriculum and instruction are inclusive and responsive to the rights and needs of learners with visual impairment and multiple disabilities with visual impairment considering their cultural, religious, gender orientation, social and economic conditions and diversity;
5. Promote job placement of persons with disabilities, particularly persons with visual impairment, for decent and sustainable employment opportunities in the job markets after the attainment of university degrees or specialized training.

We at NCBM will work together with the relevant Ministries to ensure the implementation of the recommendations relevant to our local scenario for a brighter future of our children who are blind or with visual impairment.



NEWS FROM NCBM AND MEMBER-ORGANISATIONS

i) MALAYSIAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE BLIND (MAB)

Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) River of Life Project:

Early this year in 2018, blind commuters suddenly became aware that the pavements in Brickfields were being broken up and they were becoming hazardous for travel, especially for the blind. The blind commuters were wondering what actually lay behind the purpose of upgrading works being carried out by Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur (DBKL) for the pavements along Public Bank, KK Supermart and YMCA and along Jalan Scott, Jalan Tun Sambanthan 4, Jalan Thambipillai, Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad, Jalan Vivikananda, Lorong Chan Ah Tong and Jalan Chan Ah Tong. According to the men on patrol, drainage pipes and computer cables were being laid down.

Encik Muhammad Fairuz was in charge of Advocacy and Accessibility matters at the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) until his retirement at the end of 2017. He informed us that DBKL is actually embarking on the next phase of the “River of Life” project, i.e. to revive the Sungai Klang from Jalan Pekeliling to Port Klang. He recalled that the idea of bringing life back to the river had been raised at a meeting with DBKL more than ten years ago concerning accessibility for the disabled to public amenities, including the river-banks.

With the river being brought back to life, boats may be reintroduced for commuters and for sporting activities. Parks and scenic areas will be developed for all the people to enjoy.

Encik Fairuz further explained that a Malaysian company had been engaged to work with a Hong Kong company on the project and the operations should have begun in 2008 or 2009 with the deepening and cleansing of the river. River facilities will be developed for the people’s leisure and enjoyment, including leisure parks, bicycle paths, covered walkways that are accessible to the disabled, food stalls, and so on.

Celebrating Ten Years of Yoga:

At the luncheon gathering on 26th June, 2018 (Tuesday) in the Fine Arts Temple, the Chairman of the Elderly Blind Club of MAB, Godfrey Ooi Goat See, congratulated the teachers and blind participants for having carried out the Yoga programme successfully since 2009, i.e. for a period of ten years. He said that when Grace Lim Siew Chong, one of the yoga students, first approached him to start the Yoga programme, he was reminded of his school-days as a blind student in a sighted school. The blind were not allowed to take part in the Physical Exercise classes as it was assumed that it would be dangerous for them. He was, therefore, very glad that the blind Yoga participants had proved that they were capable of taking up Yoga exercises for at least ten years without any mishap.

He said that blind people were also not encouraged or they were usually excluded from dancing programmes because of the common assumption that blind people cannot learn dancing as they cannot see. However, quite recently he had taken up line-dancing classes for the past four years since 2015 after retirement and he has found dancing to be possible and great fun, even at the age of seventy.

In thanking the coordinators :- Kwek Chu Lan, Sow Moi and Kiew Oi Yong, he singled out Grace Lim Siew Chong who had initiated the programme and who had been the coordinator until last year. In 2017 when she fell in to an open manhole, she broke her knee which required surgical operation. She thanked the teachers for rallying to support her with generous contributions.



Tokens of appreciation were then presented to the four teachers in attendance-Wai Kuan, Wynie, T.J. and Lau Wai Fong.

Then prizes for good attendance over the past two years, March 2016 to March 2018, were given to the following:

Shu Siak Long – 79 times

Sow Moi – 81 times

Michael Thum Voon Teng – 84 times

Chu Nyi Moi – 87 times

Kiew Oi Yong (the champion) – 92 times.

MAB Merdeka Colouring Contest:

The contest was held at the MAB H.T. Ong Library of Complex MAB on 1st September, 2018. About 40 persons were in attendance (including participants, parents, staff, Thavasothe the Library Chairman, Mr Chandrasegaran the General Manager of MAB, and Dr. Nasir Ali Abdullah from Saudi Arabia.

There were two categories of participants, age 4 to 7 and age 8 to 12. In the first category, the winners were Muhammad Fariz Vaif, Muhammad Firas Vaif, and Hayrich.

For the second category, the first prize went to Muhammad Hasbi Siddiqi, 2nd prize to Evanna Rose and 3rd. prize to Muhammad Wahib Syaukani. After the contest, everyone celebrated and enjoyed themselves singing Merdeka songs.

Sensory Photography Exhibition:

Touching and feeling the photographs with tactile images was a very special experience for the blind who visited the photography exhibition on September 18 (Tuesday) at the Ruang Think City, Jalan Hang Kasturi, Kuala Lumpur. For the first time, the blind were able to see how images appeared on a photograph by touching the embossed features in the picture.

The photography club of MAB was set up a few months ago with help and support from the Plus Community. According to Mr. Ken Goh from Plus Community, the idea of forming the photography club of MAB was to provide the opportunity for the blind to learn a skill with which they may be able to earn some extra income. In addition, it would help the blind to build up self-confidence as well as create greater awareness among the general public concerning the abilities and capabilities of the blind.

Mr. Ken said that the MAB photography club had about seven members with varying degrees of visual impairment. Cameras costing RM300 to RM400 were made available to the visually impaired members who were given a few months, training in photography skills. They were shown how to listen and how to gauge the distance of the object before aiming the camera for the picture. They were told that for a picture to have meaning and character, they should imagine or have an idea of a story.

Mr. Ken was amazed that the visually impaired were able to come up with such beautiful and realistic pictures of various scenes or sceneries such as the slaughter of chickens by a man in the market, a group of musicians on a stage and a girl picking her nose in a bedroom. It was like Candid Camera!

ii) SOCIETY OF THE BLIND IN MALAYSIA (SBM)

New Presidential Council Line Up of SBM 2018-2020:

The Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) held their biennial general meeting at the Tower Regency Hotel and Apartments in Ipoh, Perak from June 29 to July 1, 2018.

They had their biennial elections and the Presidential Council line up for 2018-2020 is as follows:

Hj. Mohammed Nazari Hj. Othman, President

En. Mohd. Fekkeri bin Mat Jusoh, Deputy President

En. Rosham bin Sidek, Secretary-General

Mdm. Jasmine Khoo, Hon. Treasurer

Council members:

Cik Siti Huraizah binti Ruslan

Dr. Wong Huey Siew

En. Mohd. Moktar Soon

En. Maznan bin Mohd. Zain

En. Mohd Mustaza Mohamad Zain

En. Loh Kong Ken

En. Khairul Azwan bin Wahab

Dr Ahmad Shamsuri bin Muhammad

How do you serve a meal?

A basic course on serving a meal was held at the Pahang branch of SBM in Temerloh on July 21, 2018. The objective of the programme was to provide the opportunity for members to gain experience in running small food businesses and in food catering. Taking part in the programme were 22 members, including ordinary, associate and committee members.

The programme began with a presentation by Ms. Cheng Lai Peng, the food technology officer from the Pejabat Kesihatan Daerah Temerloh. She touched on matters that need to be observed in running a food business such as certification from the health office, application for MESTI Certification (Makanan Selamat Tanggungjawab Industri), equipment, cleanliness of premises, and how workers prioritise cleanliness in the use of equipment, wrapping of food and in food catering.

The second speaker was Pn. Noraini Paiman, the food science officer from the health clinic of Tanjung Lalang. She spoke on the different types of food known as the food pyramid and the proportioning of food for breakfast, lunch and dinner, the amount of water required and various health foods.

The third speaker was En. Rizuan Saidin, who was a long-time and successful food caterer. Even though his customer capacity is below 500, there is much to learn from his knowledge and experience of the food catering business. The important factors are interest, sincerity and two-way relationship.

Melaka Youth Aspiration Programme:

The youth aspiration programme was held at the Melaka branch of SBM from July 27-29 2018. The venue of the programme was the Serama Adventure Park in Durian Tunggal, Melaka. 25 members and volunteers took part in the event.

On the first day, they had the ‘Getting to know you’ session after which they broke up into smaller groups for their own group activities. In the evening, everyone got together and tried walking around the park individually without being led by anyone.

The second day began with morning exercise followed by the Tyre Travel Challenge, walking in the swamp and exploration of the jungle.

In the afternoon of the second day, they had the kayak activity followed by an evening of barbecue and group presentations.

The third day was wrapped up with the morning exercise and the high elemental challenge activity. The event was finally concluded with the closing speech from the Melaka branch chairman, En. Hashim bin Ishak, and everyone dispersed in the afternoon.

The SBM South Zone Braille Reading Competition:

The Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) held its South Zone Braille Reading Competition on September 22, 2018 (Saturday) at the Wisma SBM, Jalan Tun Sambanthan 3, Brickfields, Kuala Lumpur.

Dr. Ahmad Shamsuri, chairman of the Human Capital Development Committee (JPMI), said that the objectives of the programme was to promote braille literacy, the culture of reading and creative thinking among the blind.

Dr. Ahmad very aptly quoted Eleanor Roosevelt, wife of President Franklin Roosevelt and first lady of the USA 1933-1945, “Great minds discuss ideas, Average minds discuss events, Small minds discuss people”.

For the junior Malay category age 14-25, the winners were Fatin with the third prize, Taufik with the second prize, and Aishah from Melaka with the first prize.

For the junior English category age 14 to 25, the third prize went to Khoo Chung Tian, the second prize went to Wan Ibrasam, and the first prize to Mun Kit Yan.

In the Senior Malay Category age 26 and above, the third prize went to Abian Jambot, the second prize to Chan Sau Yin, and the first prize went to Romainun Zakaria.

For the English Senior Category age 26 and above, the third prize went to Romainun Zakaria, the second prize to Timothy Mok Kam Yin, and the first prize went to Chan Sau Yin.

iii) ST. NICHOLAS' HOME, PENANG

Ride and Run for Sight – an Annual Event of St. Nicholas' Home, Penang:

The Ride and Run for Sight event was held by St. Nicholas' Home on March 24, 2018. The annual event was hosted by Management of Queensbay Mall in conjunction with Earth Hour. It comprised a 12 kilometre ride and a 7 kilometre run by both sighted and visually impaired participants. The event was co-organised with G Club Penang and it had the support of Majlis Bandar Pulau Pinang (MBPP).

A total of 800 cyclist and runners participated in this unique ride and run along the coastal highway. The Home managed to raise RM35,000 after expenses.

St. Nicholas' Sports Day:

This annual sporting event was held on April 28, 2018. For this event, the staff and trainees of the Home would come together to let their hair down as they build and plan. The theme this year was “under water”.

The staff and trainees spent about two weeks getting decorations ready for their canopies. The students and teachers from the MRSM Pendang ESOL Home School came to assist them in the event.

The Server Administrator's Course:

St. Nicholas' Home is in the process of developing and conducting a Linux Server Administrator's Training Course. The programme is especially tailored to meet the needs of blind and visually impaired persons (BVI'S).

According to the Professor of the Linux Professional Institute, an internationally recognised certification body, the objective of the programme is to train professionally qualified blind and visually impaired server administrators who can fulfil industrial requirements.



PROVIDING PERSONAL ASSISTANCE TO BLIND PERSONS WITH MULTIPLE DISABILITIES

*By Moses Choo Siew Cheong,
Executive Director, NCBM*

1. Background:

While many of our blind individuals have done well through rehabilitation and training provided by the NGO's in Malaysia, there is still a small group of blind persons who could do better if relevant facilities and services were made available to them. Persons in this group include those with multi-disabilities and those who missed out on the opportunity to acquire daily living and mobility skills.

In South Korea, the Government and the NGO's have introduced the idea of Home Help to support and improve the living standards of the severely disabled. As for Japan, it has introduced the idea of Personal Assistance in order to render support to persons with disabilities who are in need of additional assistance. In 2013, Thailand, through the Ministry of Manpower, embarked on a Personal Assistance project for those who are severely disabled or who are not so mobile.

The 11th Malaysia Plan proposed the implementation of the Personal Assistance programme. As in other countries, the programme will begin with people who are severely disabled or who are immobile. In fact, some of the organisations serving the physically disabled in Malaysia such as Beautiful Gate, Damai Disabled Society, and the Independent Living and Training Centre have been providing some form of Personal Assistance for quite some time.

However, in order to make the programme more effective, the Government has brought all the people with disabilities under one roof so that it would be more economical and practical. Moreover, the practice of Home Help and Personal Assistance is to enable persons with disabilities to live more independently on their own or within their community. It was thus in view of this idea that the establishing of Independent Living Centres came about.

Hence, the Government of Malaysia through the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development is planning to put forward an allocation in order to fund such Independent Living Centres (ILC's). Through this project, the Government will also be funding the privately operated ILC's.

Services to be provided by the ILC's are as follows:

- 1.1 Personal assistance services;
- 1.2 Rehabilitation services;
- 1.3 Peer counselling programmes;
- 1.4 Advocacy programmes.

One of the conditions for setting up an ILC is that the body must constitute at least 51% of people with disabilities.

2. Proposal:

In order to demonstrate how such services can assist the blind to become more independent, I would like to propose that NCBM's Development Fund allocate some money for member-organisations to run such Personal Assistance Services.

The services include:

- 2.1 Assisting blind persons with their hospital consultation;
- 2.2 Assisting blind persons with personal errands such as EPF withdrawals, banking, shopping and other transactions that involve high risks.

In order to ensure that such services do not get entangled with the programmes already being provided by some of our organisations, I would like to suggest that the Personal Assistance Services be financed by NCBM. In addition, the programme will be specifically for those who are residing independently on their own.

3. Implementation:

So how does this scheme work?

- 3.1 Member-organisations will recruit a pool of Personal Assistants to help blind persons perform various chores (as mentioned above). Personal Assistants will not be part of the staff of the organisations but rather they are a pool of personnel that are on call.
- 3.2 Each time a Personal Assistant is requested, NCBM will pay RM20 per hour for work done. The payment can be disbursed by member-organisations and they can then make reimbursement claims from NCBM.
- 3.3 To ensure that the system is not abused, blind persons requesting such services should top up with some payment, especially with the payment of travelling costs.
- 3.4 To avoid misunderstanding, blind persons requesting the service will not be given the choice of deciding whom the Personal Assistant will be. This will be left to the discretion of the coordinator under the employment of the respective member-organisation.
- 3.5 A proper log-book should be maintained in order to record such information as follows-the person requesting for the service, the person rendering the service, duration of service, nature of work covered, total amount of service fee to be paid, the amount to be subsidised by NCBM.
- 3.6 NCBM will reimburse the claims at the end of the year.

4. Conclusion:

The proposed plan is to be run as a pilot programme with the objective of using it as an example and ultimately as a means to convince the Government that such Personal Assistance funding can be of help to blind persons, especially those facing severe disabilities or who have multiple disabilities, to live a more fruitful live.

In actual fact, I was involved with the Government in working out the terms of the Personal Assistance scheme. I am, therefore, aware that there are plans by the Government to roll out the system in the not too distant future.

Furthermore, the proposal has been laid on the table for the consideration of the NCBM Council and they have endorsed the idea of seeing the programme being implemented.

Note:

Views and suggestions from readers and friends are most welcome.

DISCOVERY EXPLORATION WALK TO MID- VALLEY MALL

by Dr. Gordon Tan Tok Shiong

It was a simple but very interesting discovery exploration walk made by 15 elderly blind persons from the Elderly Blind Club of MAB on June 19, 2018 (Tuesday). They were assisted by twelve girl guides and five teachers from the Federal Territory Girl Guides' Association of Kuala Lumpur.

After a short thank-you speech by the Chairman of the elderly blind club, Godfrey Ooi, the guides were paired off with the walkers by the two coordinators, K.K. Goh and Tan Tok Shiong, ensuring that both could communicate in the same language. Then, after making sure that everyone had lined up properly, the teacher Puan Ong, blew the whistle and they set off on the two-kilometre journey from the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) in Brickfields to the Mid-Valley Mall (also known as the Megamall). The oldest blind person taking part in the walk was George Wong, aged eighty-two.

In order to avoid the massive roadworks going on for the River of Life project, we took the route along Jalan Thambipillai, walking past familiar landmarks like the Summer View Hotel, Hotel Sentral and the Vivikananda Secondary School. Then we walked along the main roads of Jalan Tun Sambanthan and Jalan Sultan Abdul Samad.

After 45 minutes in to the walk, we stopped by at the food-court in Little India, a town centre which had been recently developed by the Dewan Bandaraya of Kuala Lumpur (DBKL). The stalls at the food-court offered a typical Malaysian breakfast of mee goreng, nasi lemak, tosai and an assortment of kuih. The meal cost only RM6 per head.

Then we resumed our walk along Jalan Tun Sambanthan 1 and turned left in to Jalan Ang Seng. Here we were surprised to discover that there was a five-star 40-storey high hotel called the Alila Bangsar, which had been opened just a few months earlier.

At the end of Jalan Ang Seng, we continued along a relatively unused motorcycle lane and passed by an old Hindu temple where several dogs barked at us persistently as we passed by. Located just next to the motorcycle lane about 100 metres away from Mid Valley was a Malay food stall which was closed for the Hari Raya Puasa holidays.

We then walked across a concrete bridge over the Klang River. There were some electric buggies ferrying to and fro carrying employees from a company nearby to the Mid Valley Mall. They were using the buggies probably for security reasons as the motorcycle lane was quite isolated. In fact, members from the general public could also use the buggies if they were not occupied.

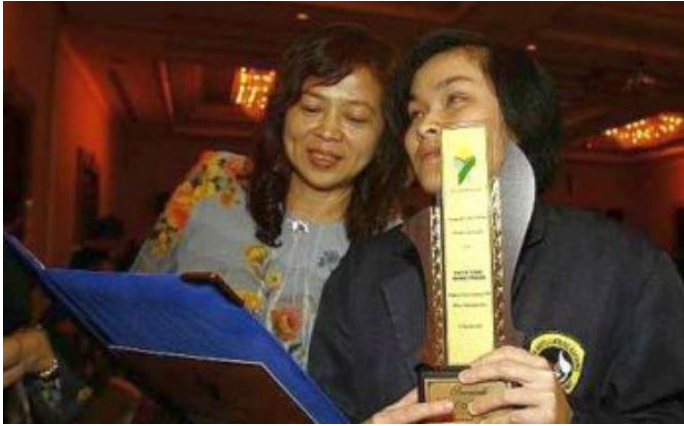
At the Megamall, we gathered on the first floor of the North Court for a group photograph. Then we adjourned to a quiet corner on a staircase landing for a sing-along session. The girl guides sang many of their favourite girl-guide songs to the accompaniment of Godfrey's guitar. Then the elderly blind members sang a number of Malay oldies followed by K.K. Goh with his rendition of "Madu Tiga" and Lim Ah Pen belting out some Chinese favourite numbers. The girls loved them and yelled out for more. We probably made such a racket which attracted the security guards who told us politely that we could sing if we had a written permission from the Management.

So we broke up in to pairs so that the volunteers could take their blind partners for some shopping followed by lunch. We then gathered around the North Court once more at about 1 p.m. and started walking back to the Mid Valley train station to catch the commuter train for Brickfields. While waiting for the train, the girl guides called out for more songs to be sung and so we sang for about half an hour until the train arrived.

Indeed, walking, shopping and having meals in unfamiliar places can be a very exciting and enjoyable activity for the blind when accompanied by dedicated volunteers. While the environment that we journeyed through may be familiar, there was still a lot for us to discover and learn through the eyes of our volunteers.

We would like to record our heartfelt thanks to the volunteers from the Girl Guides' Association for their invaluable services rendered. We also thank the three blind persons-Godfrey, Gordon and Goh for sponsoring the breakfast and lunch.

By Ruth Yong Wang Theen



I studied for a Bachelor's Degree in Arts and Social Science at Monash University, Kuala Lumpur from 2013 to 2017, majoring in Communications and minoring in Psychology. Being a visually impaired student, I had to put in much more effort and time in my studies than sighted people.

Going through the first semester had been a truly harrowing experience for me. For about seven weeks out of the twelve for the semester, I had a hard time dealing with some technical issues. For example, I had great difficulty in reading the PDF version of the lecture notes as they contained images which could not be read by the JAWS software. Thus, I had to wait a long time for the Student Welfare Council to help me get them converted in to readable formats such as Ms-Word. I also had difficulties in accessing the Monash University library databases to look up journal articles for my assignments. This was due to the fact that the webpage interface was unsuitable for screen-reader users.

Furthermore, when communicating with the lecturers, they were very slow to respond. For the introductory psychology unit, I was required to read two textbooks. I had a hard time getting the softcopy of the textbooks from Australia and only managed to get them on the seventh and eighth week of the semester. Moreover, most of the assignments were very tough and I was not given extension of time for any of the assignments.

One day, feeling greatly stressed and frustrated, I burst in to tears. Indeed, at the initial stage of my studies, I had great difficulty in adapting to university life because of the heavy workload. Especially during the first few semesters, I often felt homesick and I fell ill almost every month.

Once, during my fourth year at the university, I became severely ill with diarrhoea and fever and I had to be hospitalised for a drip. At first, I was taken to the Sunway Medical Hospital for a check-up. After waiting for many results and the doctor's response, I was subsequently taken to the KL General Hospital for immediate treatment by the doctors there as there was no more room left in Sunway Medical Hospital.

Due to my severe illness, I was unable to take part in a group presentation as I had missed two days of classes. Fortunately, my lecturer was kind enough to postpone my presentation and I was allowed to do an individual presentation. Semester 2 of 2014 was most challenging due to my inability to cope with some visual studies. In the communications unit, I was required to watch a movie each week and to write an analysis for my assignment.

Then, for the psychology unit, I found the SPSS software, used to research on statistics, to be unsuitable for my JAWS software. The SPSS software was in image form. I cried really badly almost every week during the semester and this led me to decide taking an intermission break from semester 1 of 2015. I felt that I needed to recover emotionally and mentally from the ordeal.

During the break, I worked part-time at the Sarawak Society for the Blind in Kuching where I taught basic ICT, braille and basic English. I also took up an online distance learning course at Open University, Kuching. After this recuperation, I decided to continue my second-year semester in July 2015 at Monash and then things began to go by more smoothly.

In spite of all the difficulties that I had to face, I told myself I had to remain patient and calm and that I had to persevere if I wanted to realise my dream of success. As the semester went by, things became easier at times and I was blessed with many supportive friends especially during my final year.

I often took time to do my revision and assignments in the library. I found this to be the most enjoyable part of my experience as I could concentrate better, thereby getting more work done. Moreover, this gave me the opportunity to socialise and make friends with others in the library.

I am truly thankful to God for a very supportive lecturer, Dr. Nicholas Chan. He obtained his PhD from Oxford University and he was teaching International Relations. He was really a unique lecturer as he was the only one who had been very supportive of my needs. He would go the extra mile to help me, apart from my studies. He would give me a listening ear when I faced personal challenges.

He would patiently explain the things that I did not understand after the lectures. He would constantly amend his lecture slides containing images in to words and to try out assessment comments in MS Word so that my computer software would be able to read to me. I was truly blessed to have had such a kind and caring lecturer, unlike the other lecturers who did not provide for me and simply left me to rely on my friends for assistance.

During my final semester, I had the opportunity to take up one of the business units as an elective study. An Australian exchange student was assigned to explain to me and help to convert the images in to MS Word, thus easing my studies a great deal. I had other friends who accompanied me for walks, for a meal or just for a laugh and a chat. I will never forget the times when we went out shopping to get the things that we needed or enjoyed.

On the other hand, I also had numerous unpleasant experiences. I faced mistreatment by one of the university counsellors, the library staff and even some students. I had to deal with serious laptop issues so that I had to send the laptop for repairs several times. Nevertheless, I believe all these challenges have actually taught me to be stronger, wiser and more determined to face the long road ahead of me.

Monash has given me both good and bad memories and I really appreciate whatever experiences I have faced throughout the journey. Truly, the journey of four and a half years had not been easy for me, but with God's guidance, I had been able to persevere and all my efforts and hard work have been worthwhile. In spite of my disability of visual impairment, I have been

able to achieve my goal to graduate from one of the most well-established universities.

During my graduation day, which was held on April 7 2018, I was deeply touched by the Vice Chancellor when, in his speech, he kept commending me for my determination to go through the journey until graduation. Indeed, I felt such great joy as we celebrated my success that night.

I would really like to continue being an inspiration and encouragement to others! I want to keep up the positive mindset instead of allowing negativity to take control of me!

Before parting, therefore, I would like to leave all of you with this quote by Albert Einstein: “ I have tried and have failed 99 times, but on the 100th time came success”.



By Moses Choo Siew Cheong

Editor's Note: Whatever is said in this article does not affect the status of Malay braille as this only concerns the Unified English Braille code.

BrailleBlaster is a braille transcription software that was developed by the American Printing House for the Blind. The project was initiated by APH in collaboration with View Plus and Abilities.

Designed primarily for editing textbooks that meet with the specifications drawn up by the Braille Authority of North America, the purpose of BrailleBlaster is to enable braille transcribers and producers to provide blind students with English braille textbooks on the first day of class.

BrailleBlaster takes advantage of the rich mark-up contained in NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard) files to automate basic formatting, thereby availing the user with the tools to make advanced tasks quicker and easier.

BrailleBlaster further relies on Liblouis, a well known open-source braille translator, for translating text and mathematics in to braille. It is indeed a revolutionary new tool for producing braille textbooks and other braille materials more speedily, with much greater ease and at lower cost.

The National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard (NIMAS) is an XML-based source file format. Its files are used exclusively to produce accessible formats for Knowledge-12 students with qualifying print disabilities.

When NIMAS or other types of files are opened in BrailleBlaster, it converts them to its own BBX format. The BBX file may then be exported to various other file types.

BrailleBlaster features include the following:

- _ Translation of braille accurately in to UEB or EBAE;
- _ Formatting of braille;
- _ Automation of line numbers for poetry and prose;
- _ Splitting of books in to volumes;
- _ Description images;
- _ Automation of a variety of table styles like table of contents, glossaries, and so on.

For more information, you may contact:

BrailleBlaster Support__

Email bbsupport@atech.aph.org



A POINT TO PONDER: STOP LOOK GO!

By Wong Kow

I remember my early years in school when we were often taught to “Stop look go” in a good number of lessons. These lessons were mainly aimed at teaching the young school students about the good habits of road safety in fact, the good habits of “stop look go”. Such good habits should be applied not only to walking, cycling and driving but they should also be practised in our daily lives.

In one of my previous articles entitled “why are you in a hurry?”, I had made the suggestion that my niece, Josephine, should wake up half an hour earlier every morning so that she would have ample time to check through things before driving slowly or better still taking a walk to the office. This would help her to avoid being late to work, making unnecessary mistakes or getting involved in mishaps.

Indeed, accidents, mishaps or serious mistakes can occur in a second’s flash. They can often be avoided, however, If one would only apply the good habit of “stop look go!”

You are probably quite familiar with the story of a man living in a high rise condominium who was told that the lift was not working due to power failure. Thus, he had to climb the stairs to his home on the fiftieth floor. Unfortunately, the effort of climbing all the way had been in vain because it suddenly dawned upon him that he had forgotten to bring along his house door keys!

Well, even more serious mishaps do occur every now and then. You could just simply be at home or you are merely involved in your daily activities when such a mishap may strike. Nevertheless, some measures can be taken in order to avoid getting in to such a mess.

In the kitchen, for example, after the cooking has been done, you should spend a little extra time going through some of the safety measures. Make sure that the stove is properly turned off, knives or other sharp objects are put

in a safe place, a spillage of oil or other food items is cleaned up immediately so that one will not fall on a slippery floor, and so on.

In the bathroom, the floor is usually wet. It is especially slippery after we have used shampoo or soap for cleansing. And you must beware of the water heater-some of them could heat up the water to an unbearably hot temperature almost immediately upon being turned on. You should, therefore, make sure that the water temperature is suitable before pouring a bucketful of the water on to your whole body. In fact, one should be extra careful when using the water heater in a bathroom with which one is not familiar such as in a hotel.

Climbing up and down the stairs is another daily activity which could be dangerous if one is careless. Any object, which could be a piece of fruit skin or even just a tiny piece of paper, may cause one to fall.

The living room at home, of course, seems much less hazardous than the three spots mentioned earlier. Nonetheless, the glasses on the table, the sharp corners of furniture or toys on the floor could lead to accidental cuts, knocks, bruises or other injuries if one is not careful.

When you leave home for work or for any other activities, make sure that the four points mentioned above have been well attended to. Then remember to bring along with you all the necessary items for the day. You would probably have heard of someone bringing along the wrong passport for an overseas trip and realising it when he is already at the customers' checkpoint. You should really take every precaution in order to avoid such a mishap.

Last, but not least, when you lock the main door of your house, never, never forget to take out the keys and put them safely in your pocket or in your bag without fail. You can surely imagine what the consequences would be if the keys are left hanging outside the door and you are not at home.

Indeed, there are hundreds or reasons for us to stop for a moment and look carefully before going ahead. I believe that readers will certainly agree with me that we should not be in a hurry no matter whether we are walking, driving, shopping working in the office, and so on.

Undoubtedly, younger children and senior citizens are more prone to accidents. And it is true that there is no foolproof method or a 100 percent safety measure even for the youth and for the able-bodied. No matter what, however, the good habit of applying the golden rule of “stop look go” can greatly minimise the undesirable happenings in one’s life.

In conclusion, I would like to convey this friendly reminder an incoming telephone call or a visitor ringing on your doorbell can easily interrupt your routine. You may be cooking, cutting vegetables or looking after a toddler and the sudden ringing of the phone or the doorbell causes confusion as to what should be the priority of your attention. Don’t forget that the caller can always try again.

The caller or visitor should be patient enough to wait for you. On the other hand, you need to make sure that the gas cooker is turned off, the knives are properly placed and your toddler is safe before you attend to the phone call or to the visitor.

I guess it is true that any message, no matter how inspiring, could be easily forgotten. On the other hand, however, if you could but pause for a little while and make the right move, then you will stand to gain in life. And so with good habits, go on to enjoy safe and happy days ahead.



SUN TSU'S ART OF WAR - THE MALAYSIAN EXPERIENCE

By Ooi Hock Tiam

Editor's note: En. Ooi Hock Tiam has been totally blind from childhood and he studied at Kent University in Canterbury, England from 1988 to 1989 whereby he obtained his Master's Degree in International Relations. He has subsequently been teaching International Relations in the History Department of the School of Humanities in Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Penang since 1991. He is currently lecturing on International Relations and Modern European History.

At a University seminar, Ooi presented a paper on Sun Tsu and The Art of War-the Malaysian experience. He has kindly agreed to share his knowledge and information, especially for the benefit of our blind readers.

Thus, here is a shortened version of the presentation:

It was during the age of Confucius in China, also known as the war years around 500 B.C., when the book on "The Art of War" by Sun Tsu was written. In his book, Sun Tsu explains how a small army can overcome a big military force.

In the civil war between the state of Wu and the state of U, Sun Tsu related how with the forces of King Helu of Wu numbering only 30,000, he was able to defeat the army of Chu numbering 300,000 under the command of Nan Wah. How did he do it?

Sun Tsu outlines ten principles to be followed for launching a war :

1. Know your enemy's strength and understand your own situation.
2. Outwit your enemy; don't attack your enemy.
3. Avoid the strong and attack the weak.
4. A good network of spies.
5. Direct engagement; indirect attack.
6. Know the weather.
7. Know the terrain.
8. A disciplined army.
9. Good leadership.
10. Good moral support.

According to Sun Tsu, war is fundamental to the existence and strength of a dynasty or empire. In view of this, war requires careful planning and should only be executed when there is no other choice. Sometimes it is preferable to use other means than war in order to achieve success.

In the historical context of modern Malaysia, the evident application of Sun Tsu's war tactics was seen in how the Japanese army conquered Malaya in December 1941. Before Japan attacked, they despatched a reconnaissance force to assess the strength of the British forces in Malaya. They ascertained that the point of least resistance in the defence system of Malaya lay in the north rather than in the south. Thus, they attacked and captured Kota Bharu instead of Singapore.

In actual fact, the British had expected Japan to attack Singapore first. However, Japan had put in to practice Sun Tsu's wise tactic, "Avoid the Strong and Attack the Weak". In so doing, Japan effectively subjugated the whole of Malaya in less than two months.

While the invasion was taking place, Japan had, through its reconnaissance force, learned that the British had a strong military fortress at the Slim River area. In order to capture the fortress, Japan sent a battalion from Penang through Kuala Selangor and subsequently followed up with another battalion from the north. The British soldiers were thus surrounded both from north and south.

While pressing on with its conquest, Japan also used propaganda to great effect. With its slogan, "Asia for Asians", Japan was able to gain the moral support from the people locally, especially the Malays, and this proved to be an important factor in enabling Japan to defeat the western imperial power. They had, in fact, employed the tactic advocated by Sun Tsu, i.e. to launch an effective battle, the attacker must have the moral support of its citizens as well as the local people.

On the part of the British, while they may have had an understanding of Sun Tsu's teaching, they were not able to defend Malaya as their attention was diverted towards Europe. Thus, the success of Japan in overcoming the British army in Malaya had proved the potency of Sun Tsu's ideas, i.e. a battle must be carried out skilfully, well planned and backed up by propaganda and

trickery. This strategy had, in fact, been employed by Sun Tsu 2,500 years ago when he led the forces of Wu against the state of Chu.

No less interesting in the history of Malaysia was the application of Sun Tsu's teaching concerning the 1948-1960 Emergency, which was declared by the British in the order to deal with the Communist threat. In fact, both of the opposing forces tried to put in to practice the teaching of Sun Tsu.

The Communists were led by Chin Peng and one of the tactics they used was guerrilla warfare. This meant that they would only attack the areas where the British defences were weak and then they would withdraw. As Sun Tsu had said, during a battle a clever general will not fight face to face with the enemy. In fact, in applying this tactic, the Communists had brought about a great setback for the British colonial government in the early phase of the Emergency.

This time, however, the British were better prepared and ready in the application of Sun Tsu. They set up the new villages in order to resettle the local population and prevent them from providing assistance to the Communists. The new villages were then fenced up and placed under the control of security personnel. Once these areas were considered free from the Communist threat, they would be declared as the white areas. Consequently, the Communists had great difficulty in obtaining help and support from the villagers. In accordance with Sun Tsu, an enemy can be weakened and eventually defeated if they lose assistance and support.

During the emergency, both sides spied on each other. The Communists tried to influence the Workers' Union to go on strike in order to bring down the economy. As for the British, who were better at playing the political game, they were successful at infiltrating spies in to the Communist network. Lai Teck, the Secretary-General of the Communist Party of Malaya, was actually a double agent. Through him, the British were able to know of all the movements of the Communist Party. In accordance with Sun Tsu, a good spy network provides a better advantage in winning a war. Thus, the Communists suffered a major setback when Lai Teck suddenly disappeared with a large sum of money in 1947.

In terms of morale, the British also had an advantage. While Chin Peng claimed that his struggle was to free Malaya from British colonial rule, the British, who had been weakened by World War II, were ready to grant Malaya independence in 1957. Despite this loss of morale, the Communists continued their struggle against the Malayan Government but they no longer had the moral support of the local people. As Sun Tsu had said, a battle without a strong moral basis will be in vain. The emergency was thus brought to an end in 1960 with failure of the Communists in their struggle.

Thus, while the ideas advocated by Sun Tsu 2,500 years ago may not seem to be relevant to the history of Malaysia, the theory and principles of Sun Tsu can be used as a guide and put in to practice by all the politicians in Malaysia as they go forward and lead the country to its future destiny.



SOME HUMOUROUS TIDBITS

The blinds man:

A blind woman was in her bath when somebody knocked at the door.

“Who is it?” she asked.

“The blinds man,” he answered.

So she came out undressed to open the door and discovered that he was not a blind man. He was the “blinds man” with the windows.

Honeymoon:

A newly married couple was on honeymoon in a chalet. The lights went off early and the toilet was far away. So when the man came back from the toilet and could not identify his room, he stopped at every door to call, “honey.”

One man got so irritated that he replied, “sorry, this is not a beehive.”

Screw loose:

A person went up to speak. During his speech, the p.a. system stopped working.

After repairing the system, the M.C. came up and apologised.

He said, “Sorry for the delay. There was a screw loose in the speaker.”

REFLECTIONS UNKNOWN AUTHOR-ON THE PROBLEMS IN LIFE:

~~Most problems in life arise because of two reasons- we act without thinking~~

or we keep thinking without acting.

You can't change how people feel about you;

So don't try. Just live your life and be happy.

How does one respond to fear? Forget everything and run, or face everything and rise. The choice is yours.

The greatest gift is not found in the material things that you give away. It is found in the hope that you inspire through the love and friendship that you share.

We come in to this world with nothing. Likewise we go out of this world with nothing. But there is one great thing that we can achieve in this beautiful life, which is a little remembrance in someone's mind and a small place in someone's heart.



SOME QUOTATIONS

Tan Thiam Hock in The Star 19 May, 2018:

Right actions in the future are the best apologies for bad actions in the past.

James Allen:

The law of harvest is to reap more than you sow. Sow an act and you reap a habit. Sow a habit and you reap a character. Sow a character and you reap a destiny.

Anonymous:

He who dares to teach must never cease to learn.

Anonymous:

Love is the master key which opens the gates of happiness.

Anonymous:

Life can only be understood backwards but it must be lived forward.

Charles Caleb Colson:

Friendship often ends in love; but love in friendship, never.

Mark Twain:

To get the full value of joy you must have someone to divide it with.

Anonymous:

Your vision will become clear only when you can look into your own heart.

Anonymous:

The way to love anything is to realise that it might be least.

Anonymous:

You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face.

Anonymous:

Life is not a problem to be solved but a reality to be experienced.

Socrates:

The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.

Dr. Seuss:

Don't cry because it's over, smile because it happened.

John Keats:

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.

Santosh Kalwar:

If I can see pain in your eyes then share with me your tears. If I can see joy in your eyes then share with me your smile.

Anonymous:

Teachers open the door but you must walk through it yourself.

Charles Dickens:

The pain of parting is nothing to the joy of meeting again.



PRINCIPAL OFFICE BEARERS AND COUNCIL MEMBERS OF NCBM FOR 2018 - 2020

Dato' Dr. Hsiung Kwo Yeun
President, NCBM/ President of Sarawak Society for the Blind

Datuk Rosalind Chew Bee Koh
Vice-President, NCBM/ President of Sabah Society for the Blind

Rt. Rev. Dato' Dr. Charles Samuel
Hon. Secretary, NCBM/ Chairman of St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

Mdm. Jasmine Khoo Khin Sheen
Hon. Treasurer, NCBM/ Hon. Treasurer of Society of the Blind in Malaysia

Dato' Kulasegaran A/L Sabaratnam
Malaysian Association for the Blind

Dato' Dr. Sharom Ahmat
St. Nicholas' Home, Penang

Mr. Jimmy Ng Kich Sheng
Sabah Society for the Blind

Dr. Ahmad Shamsuri Bin Muhamad
Society of the Blind in Malaysia

Mdm. Annie Soon Nyin Yin
Sarawak Society for the Blind

Mr. David Siaw Ting Cheng
Sarawak Society for the Blind



CHAIRPERSONS OF COMMITTEES OF NCBM FOR 2018- 2020

Committee on Education (COE)
Dr Kway Eng Hock

Committee on Employment and Economic Empowerment
(CEEE) Dr Ahmad Shamsuri Bin Muhamad

Committee on Public Awareness (CPA)
Datuk Rosalind Chew Bee Koh



AUDITOR 2018- 2020

Inpana & Associates,
Kuala Lumpur



REPRESENTATIVES OF NCBM TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS, 2018- 2020

World Blind Union/ World Blind Union Asia Pacific
(WBU/WBUAP)
Dato' Dr. Hsiung Kwo Yeun and Mr Moses Choo Siew Cheong



EARN SOME EXTRA CASH

Readers are invited to write for our publication, “NCBM Outreach”. For articles published, Payment are as follows:

1. Original articles on the achievements of blind people or of an inspirational nature (about 500 words) - RM80
2. Articles containing ideas and suggestions for the improvement of NCBM or its Member-Organisations (about 500 words) - RM80
3. Articles on funny or unusual experiences (250/500 words) - RM40/RM80
4. Poems which are personal compositions depicting experiences of a blind person (about 50/100 words) - RM40/RM80
5. Articles of an informative nature written in your own words (about 500 words) - RM80.

Note: Articles submitted by officials of NCBM or its Member-Organisations will not qualify for payment unless the submissions have nothing to do with their daily office duties.

Also, full payment will be made if the article requires little or no editing.