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 $\label{thm:local_contributor} The \ views \ expressed \ in \ this \ publication \ are \ those \ of \ the \ author/contributor \ and \ do \ not \ necessarily \ represent \ the \ views \ of \ NCBM.$

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.

EDITORIAL BOARD

Moses Choo Siew Cheong
Wong Yoon Loong
Wong Kwee Heong
Chin Yew Cheng

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

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:

NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE BLIND, MALAYSIA OR MAJLIS KEBANGSAAN BAGI ORANG BUTA, MALAYSIA

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^{*} NCBM has not appointed any agent to collect cash on our behalf.

ANNOUNCE DIVIDINGS

NCBM'S SUPPORT SCHEMES FOR THE BLIND

1. 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.

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CHANGING WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLIND

2018 has been an outstanding year for the World Blind Union. Our presence and influence on the international stage continue to grow.

Through the efforts of the United Nations Ambassador from Antigua and Barbuda, Dr. Aubrey Webson, the UN has officially designated 4th January as World Braille Day. World Braille Day gives us the opportunity to spread our message that blind children and adults have the right to full literacy, and using braille, they can learn and work as others.

It is important to begin making your plans to attend the 2020 General Assembly. Our very capable member organization in Spain, ONCE, will host the 2020 General Assembly in Madrid. As with the last two General Assemblies, the assembly will be conducted jointly with the International Council for Education of People with Visual Impairment (ICEVI). The joint assembly will run from 19 through 24 June 2020.

Other achievements during 2018 include transitioning from our first and very capable CEO, Mr. Jose Viera. Jose is off to a strong start and is leading a number of new and promising initiatives.

Last fall, Jose was designated as a permanent representative of the United Nations Stakeholder group of persons with disabilities. In his new role, Jose will be able to contribute to the broader disability agenda while raising the visibility of the World Blind Union and the needs of blind and partially sighted people.

On 3 December 2018, The World Blind Union joined The Global Compact for inclusive Smart cities titled: "accessibility in smart cities and urban settlements." The initiative will help planners to address accessibility at the earliest design stages.

Another way we work to insure that blind and partially sighted individuals are represented is through our participation in the International Disability Alliance (IDA). In April 2018, I was elected Second Vice Chair of IDA. Participation in the IDA helps insure that our voice is heard and that we speak for ourselves in matters of international programs and policy.

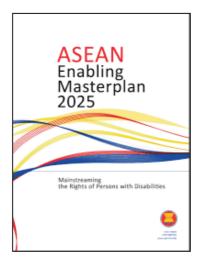
We know that we must work to expand opportunities for blind and partially sighted people everywhere, and that means actively supporting our members. In 2018 we initiated projects in Pakistan and Rwanda to implement and monitor the sustainable development goals; Ms Jessica Jacoby has been designated as the human rights officer for the Caribbean region; and we completed the transfer of the world braille foundation to the World Blind Union and will continue granting scholarships to support blind and partially sighted people in developing countries.

As you read our 2018 annual report, you will gain a fuller understanding of the challenges blind and partially sighted children and adults face and a deeper understanding of our collective efforts. As you read, please look for ways to contribute your efforts to the global movement of blind people toward full and equal participation.

Together we can change the future. Thank you for all you do.

CELLING TO KNOW THE ASEAN ENABRING MASTERPLAN 2025

By Nadhir Nasir & Wong Yoon Loong



In the previous issue, NCBM Outreach published our article entitled "Strengthening the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008". In that article, we touched on the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025: Mainstreaming the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Through this article, we shall confabulate further on the regional strategic framework for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in ASEAN Member States. However, to relate this document to the reality in Malaysia, we shall discuss the Masterplan in comparison to the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 and the Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022.

To begin, we look at the similarities between these three instruments. They come from the same seed and work toward the same basic goal: the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities. The root of this is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which was adopted by the United Nations in 2006. The development of the Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022 and the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 also take into account the content of the Incheon Strategy to "Make the Right Real" for Persons with Disabilities in Asia and the Pacific 2013-2022, also known as the 3rd Asia-Pacific Decade for Persons with Disabilities.

The differences can be seen in terms of the content and its organization. Obviously, the way legislation is written is different than a strategic or action plan, but, when we put the Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022 and the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 side by side, we can still spot a huge difference in the way both frameworks were prepared. Yes, we know the former was developed for a national scope, while the latter is for a region. However, most of the target programs underlined in the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 are national-level actions, be them in education, employment, entrepreneurship, disaster management, or urbanization.

The Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022 presents issue-based programs (accessibility, employment, education, healthcare, social services, disaster management, political participation, research and development, advocacy, and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities). In contrast, the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 divides its target programs based on three main pillars: political-security, economic, and socio-cultural.

Though these three instruments can be linked together, the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 lays out quite a detailed target programs in few areas, namely; entrepreneurship and political participation. In entrepreneurship, for instance, several target programs are underlined, such as training, access to information, funding opportunities, assistance in product marketing, accessible marketplaces, as well as legal protection. The ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 also covers a few extra themes which are not covered in either the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 or the Action Plan for Persons with disabilities 2016-2022. Those themes include access to justice, climate change, inclusion in STEM related fields and smart city development.

Upon further analysis of the content of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025, we identified two vital characteristics which are absent in the Persons with Disabilities Act 2008 and the Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022. Those characteristics are international cooperation and engagement and the importance of the harmonization process. These two characteristics are consistent throughout the Masterplan, either in the political-security sector, economic sector, or socio-cultural sector.

We firmly believe that it is time for the Malaysian government to review and revise the Action Plan for Persons with Disabilities 2016-2022 to also reflect the target programs underscored in the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025. We only have just over 2 years before the mid-term review of the ASEAN Enabling Masterplan 2025 in 2021. Time flies fast. Thus, we must work faster and harder.

NASIONAL



Jun 27, 2019 9:01 pm



KUALA LUMPUR, 27 Jun: Kerajaan merancang untuk menjadikan polisi satu peratus pekerja di setiap kementerian terdiri daripada kalangan Orang Kurang Upaya (OKU) sebagai Petunjuk Prestasi Utama (KPI) bagi setiap kementerian, kata Timbalan Menteri Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga dan Masyarakat Hannah Yeoh.

Beliau berkata polisi satu peratus pekerjaan buat OKU itu telahpun diperkenalkan sebelum ini, namun penguatkuasaannya lemah, kerana tiada siapa yang akan dikenakan tindakan atau ditegur sekiranya kementerian berkenaan gagal mematuhinya.

"Sekarang kita letakkan polisi ini di bawah KPI Ketua Setiausaha di setiap kementerian. Ini bermakna semua Ketua Setiausaha ini perlu memastikan kementerian masing-masing mengambil petugas dari kalangan OKU," katanya kepada pemberita selepas melawat sesi Temuduga Terbuka khusus bagi OKU anjuran AEON CO.(M) Bhd di sini hari ini.

Katanya dengan mengambil petugas dari kalangan OKU, ia juga akan meningkatkan kepelbagaian dalam kementerian terbabit, menjadikan ia lebih inklusif di samping membolehkan keperluan kumpulan ini dapat difahami ramai.

"Kami pastinya akan mewujudkan persekitaran selamat bagi pekerja. Kami sedang melihat kepada usaha mewujudkan persekitaran yang lebih selamat kepada pekerja," katanya. –BERNAMA

This article was quoted from Bernama dated 27 June 2019.

NEWS FROM NCBM AND MEMBER-ORGANISATIONS

FOR THE BLIND (MAB)

MAB JOB PLACEMENTS 2018

In 2018, MAB was able to place thirty-five blind persons in employment. They are as follows – five administrative assistants, 22 masseurs, 1 housekeeping attendant, 1 telemarketeer, 1 marketing executive, 1 human resource assistant, 1 therapy assistant, 1 cleaner, 1 cashier, and 1 waiter at a restaurant in Johor.

MAB BRAILLE READING COMPETITION 2019

About 100 persons attended the Braille Reading Competition on 6th April organised by MAB. Cash prizes of RM300, RM200 and RM100 were awarded to the winners in all the four categories – Bahasa Melayu 25 Years and Below, Bahasa Melayu 26 Years and Above, English 25 Years and Below, and for English 26 Years and Above.

For the B.M. 25 and below category, Ponraj a/l Sivaraj came first followed by Nurin Amalin Ishak and Nur Hafizah bt. Saharuddin. For the B.M. 26 and Above, Abian Jambot came first followed by Romainun Zakaria and Uma Shanggari Selvarani.

For the English 25 and Below, Rishan Ponraj a/l Sivaraj came first followed by Nurin Amalin Ishak and Nur Hafizah bt. Saharuddin. For the English 26 and Above, Tan Boon Khim came first followed by Radzimah bt. Mat Yasin and Romainun Zakaria.

THE 2ND MAB EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS FOR THE BLIND AND VISUALLY IMPAIRED 2017/2018

The Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) acknowledged and awarded the blind and visually impaired persons (VIPs) for their outstanding achievements at the Association's 2nd Excellence Achievement Awards 2017/2018 ceremony. The programme was held at the Tun Hussein Onn National Eye Hospital (THONEH) auditorium on 20th April 2019 (Saturday).

In line with the theme, "It's not our disability but our abilities that count", MAB President, YM Tan Sri Dato' Seri Tengku Azlan ibni Almarhum Sultan Abu Bakar, said that this was MAB's effort in motivating and inspiring the VIPs to achieve greater heights in all their endeavours to lead a normal active life.

Dato' Kulasegaran Sabaratnam, Deputy President of MAB, said that it was his pride and honour to have been given the opportunity to serve MAB for the past 50 years approximately. He said that "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. The best and most beautiful things in the world cannot be seen or even touched – they must be felt with the heart."

His respect towards the blind was that they had encountered many obstacles and challenges in overcoming the hurdles to fulfil their dreams to become contributing and productive citizens of our country. The Visually Impaired Persons (VIPs) have proven that with their firm mindset, nothing was impossible.

He said, "Congratulations to all my dear VIPs, you are an inspiration to everyone."

Mr. Santhisegaran Sabaratnam, Organising Chairman, said, "Today we celebrate the achievements of the visually impaired, a community that needs our support, motivation and acknowledgment for their successes. Many of the VIPs have overcome so many hurdles in their life to be where they are today. It is for us, the sighted, to recognise them for their achievements. Today we salute them. They have come a long way to be where they are."

Awards were given to six recipients for the UPSR 2017/2018, six recipients for the SPM 2017/2018, and six recipients for the STPM 2017/2018.

In higher education, awards were given to Abdul Aziz bin Tasri for his Arts Diploma, Nur Farihin bt. Abdul Razak for her Arts Degree, Adillah bt.

Jamaluddin for her Science Degree, Nazrul Muhaimin bin Abdul Aziz for his arts Master's Degree, and Dr. al-Amril bin Othman for his Doctorate Degree.

Entrepreneur achievement awards were given to Young Entrepreneur, Muhammad Zarif bin Abdul Kadir; Pioneer Entrepreneur, Arni Najihah bt. Abdullah; and Special Recognition Entrepreneur, Mohd. Zainisam bin Abd Samah.

Music achievement awards were given to solo musician, Nordin bin Hanafiah; solo singer, Thanaraju a/l Sinniah; band/duo, Dinnie and Khai.

Sports achievement awards were given to most promising sportsman, Muhammad Afiq bin Mohamad Ali Hanafiah; most promising sportswoman, Nur Syahida bt. Tajudin; best sportsman, Muhammad Afiq Afify bin Rizan; and best sportswoman, Nur Azlia Syafinaz bt. Mohd. Zais.

The community recognition award was given to Thavasothy Mailvaganam Pillai.

The special recognition gold medallists for the 3rd Asian Para Games in Jakarta, Indonesia were Nur Azlia Syafinaz bt. Mohd Zais, Nurul Suhada bt. Zainal, Muhammad Afiq Afify bin Rizan, and Muhammad Khairul Adha bin Rasol.

DEMISE OF BARNABAS LEE AH GUAN



Barnabas Lee passed away on 3rd June 2019 (Monday). According to reports, he fell on the street while alighting from the bus and a kind samaritan rushed him to the Serdang Hospital where he passed away.

Barnabas was serving on the Elderly Blind Committee of MAB since 2017 and he had been serving as a Council member of MAB over the past few years.

Earlier on, Barnabas was serving in the Low Vision Unit of MAB as the administrative assistant. While there, he had helped to upgrade the programme by introducing a lot of new low vision aids and adaptive equipment as well as new services for the benefit of the low vision clients.

At the wake service which was held for Barnabas Lee on 7th June (Friday), many friends gave inspiring eulogies testifying to the contributions of Barnabas to society, especially to the blind community.

About 50 blind persons as well as several Council members of MAB attended the wake service, demonstrating that the blindness community is very closely bound with everyone willing to throw in their support.

Dato' S. Kulasegaran, Deputy President of MAB, expressed satisfaction that full honours had been accorded to Barnabas as a Council member of MAB

and a hardworking member of the blind community in Malaysia. He said that the plight of the visually impaired had to be looked into to ensure that they are provided with decent accommodation and assistance in the twilight years. He further suggested that a special fund should be set up in MAB and NCBM that can contribute towards the expenses incurred for the wake and funeral services.

Mr. Moses Choo, Executive Director of NCBM, said that when Barnabas retired from MAB, he had left behind the Low Vision Unit which was able to meet low vision needs more adequately. He said that it was a little sad that long ago way back in 1965, Barnabas had been abandoned by his immediate family members. At that time, Barnabas knew that he had lost all ties with his parents.

Moses suggested that while St. Nicholas' had some form of support for blind senior citizens, it is about time that other organisations should also look at this area of concern. Currently, there are senior homes that will turn away the blind even if there are sponsors willing to foot the bill.

Mr. K. Sundralingam, a council member of MAB and a volunteer reader for the blind, said that he was very happy to have been volunteer reader for Barnabas and his blind friends, especially in those times when Barnabas was heading the Low Vision Department and he had done a good job. After retirement, MAB put Barnabas in charge of the service bureau with an allowance and he managed to serve the blind community well. Later, he was elected into the MAB Council where he brought up important issues at the Council meetings.Mr. Sundra said, "Barnabas was very intelligent. He read lots of management books and he talked like a manager. Indeed, he would provide advice to the managers of MAB."



ELECTION REFORMS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

An engagement session with the Election Reform Committee (ERC) and persons with disabilities was co-organised by the Society of the Blind in Malaysia (SBM) and the National Council for the Blind, Malaysia (NCBM). The programme was held at the Furama Bukit Bintang Hotel, Kuala Lumpur on 13th April 2019. Besides SBM and NCBM, representatives that came from other organisations included the Malaysian Federation of the Deaf and the Malaysian Spinal Cord Injury Association as well as interested individuals.

The objectives of organising this engagement session were to identify issues faced by persons with disabilities in Malaysia with regards to the voting and election process, to discuss possible solutions in protecting the rights and ensuring full participation of persons with disabilities in the Malaysian elections, and to create a network of cooperation between the stakeholders in consolidating the voices of persons with disabilities in Malaysia with respect to political participation.

Recommendations from the engagement session were as follows:

- 1. The Election Commission is to produce a template guide to act as a frame in assisting blind and visually impaired persons to mark the ballot paper. The template is to be made from plastic.
- 2. There is no need to produce ballot paper with Braille on it in order to protect the secrecy of the voter.
- 3. Information on the ballot paper must be prepared in audio format, either through a reader or an audio recording.
- 4. Another option is to fold the ballot paper exactly at the box to enable blind and visually impaired persons to identify the marking space easily.

- 5. Allow blind and visually impaired persons to mark the ballot paper before dipping their fingers into the permanent ink.
- 6. The Election Commission must conduct capacity development training for all its staff and other related officials on the correct way to assist and support persons with different types of impairment. For this purpose, the Commission should engage and collaborate with local disabled people's organisations.
- 7. Another suggested voting method is to allow persons with disabilities to vote early at accessible voting sites.
- 8. The Election Commission should ensure that all its staff and related officials are aware of and understand the regulations relating to support for voters with disabilities.
- 9. The Election Commission must engage and collaborate with local disabled people's organisations in educating the voters with disabilities, including conducting simulation and providing them with the necessary documents for self-advocacy purposes.
- 10. The Election Commission must provide a range of options with respect to the voting methods for voters with disabilities.
- 11. The Election Commission must ensure that the polling stations and accessible and provide the necessary support services to persons with disabilities and senior citizens.
- 12. The Election Commission must ensure that there is an authorised observer or electoral officials who can witness and ensure when a person who is deaf is called out, his or her name and I.C. number are correct.
- 13. The Election Commission must provide access to information throughout the election process, starting from the disbandment of Parliament until the announcement of the election results. For this purpose, the Election Commission must make their website, mobile application and other means of information to be accessible to all categories of persons with disabilities.

- 14. The Election Commission must establish a hotline that people can use to make complaints, especially on the voting day. A special line must also be created for persons with disabilities in the rural areas to get information about the elections.
- 15. The Election Commission must ensure that all political parties and candidates produce their election-related information in accessible formats.
- 16. Persons who use a wheelchair must be allowed to park or drop off near the polling stations. The Election Commission must also provide transportation during this process.
- 17. The nomination process must start right after the disbandment of Parliament and should last for a certain period as to be announced by the Election Commission.
- 18. The nomination process should make use of an online application system.
- 19. The election campaigns should be held for at least 14 days in order to make sure that the Election Commission has enough time to prepare the logistics involved.
- 20. The Election Commission must coordinate the data of voters with disabilities so that they can automatically vote at Channel One on the voting day.
- 21. There must be a seat for borderless representatives so that individuals with disabilities can become candidates in the General Elections.

It is hoped that all of the suggestions brought up during the discussion will be included in the interim report and the final report of the ERC to the Government. It is also hoped that the ERC will continue to engage with the parties concerned, especially in reviewing the draft of both the interim and final reports before submission.

MATTHES AND FACTS ABOUT GUIDE-DOGS

By Moses Choo Siew Cheong Executive Director National Council for the Blind, Malaysia

Editor's Note: While there has been plenty of talk about the use of guide dogs in Malaysia, at the point of writing this article we believe that very few in Malaysia owns a guide dog. However, some blind visitors have been into the country for visits accompanied by their guide dogs.

In this article, Mr. Moses Choo would like to introduce and give a better overview regarding the use of such adorable animals, thereby preparing the way for the general public to understand and ultimately to accept the use of guide dogs in Malaysia.

Here is Moses Choo to tell us about the myths and facts concerning guide dogs:

As the Americans With Disabilities Act is apparently one of the most developed acts in support of the blind, I would like to use this document for our reference. In so doing, it is hoped that we in Malaysia will be able to use the Malaysian Disability Act to cover such matters.

And so here are some of the myths and facts about guide dogs.



1. Myth: Guide dogs are adorable. Surely, it's ok if I give them a pat.

Fact: No, distracting a guide dog in harness puts the handler's safety at risk. Do not pat, feed or distract a working guide dog.

2. Myth: Guide dogs for blind people are the only real service dogs.

Fact: There is no limit to the variety of jobs that a service dog can perform, i.e. as long as the handler of the dog is disabled and the dog's task or work mitigates the disability.

3. Myth: The terms, "guide dog" and "seeing eye dog" are interchangeable.

Fact: The generic terminology for a dog which has been trained to guide a blind or visually impaired handler is known as a "guide dog" or "dog guide". The Seeing Eye is actually a guide dog training school which is located in Australia and America and only the dogs trained by this organisation are called "Seeing Eye Dogs".



4 Myth: Businesses are only required to allow guide dogs onto their premises and can prohibit pets and other types of service dogs.

Fact: Any business that is open to the public is required to allow any type of service animals onto their premises. Occasionally, however, you may come across a posted sign which says, "only guide dogs are permitted" but these signs actually carry no legal weight.

5. Myth: Restaurants and businesses that sell or deal with food can legally deny access to a service dog team.

Fact: The Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) protects the rights of disabled service animal handlers to enter all places of public accommodation. Food service businesses are not exempted.

6. Myth: Service dogs must wear a vest, special harness or some ID badge to distinguish them from pet dogs.

Fact: Neither the Federal Law or the ADA requires any special identification for service animals. However, some service dogs do need special equipment to perform their jobs correctly and such identification are used at the handler's discretion.

For example, if a handler uses patches or any ID badge to identify his or her dog as a service animal, it is being done by choice.

7. Myth: A certified or registered service dog is more legitimate than service dogs which are not.

Fact: Some service dog handlers, trainers and programmes do certify their service dogs even though it is not required by law. In fact, certain certification or registration could be as insignificant as a piece of paper if it is not with a reputable organisation. Some unscrupulous companies even charge customers a fee to certify or register a dog with their company without any verification whatsoever as to whether the dog is a legitimate service dog.

To the untrained eye, it can be quite difficult to tell the

difference between one of these companies and a legitimate service dog organisation, thereby nullifying any value of presenting proof of certification. Regardless, the ADA does not require service animals to be either certified or registered with a service dog programme or company.

8. Myth: A service dog team can be denied access to a public place because another person is afraid of or is allergic to dogs.

Fact: A service dog team must be allowed access to a place of business or a place for public accommodation regardless of other people's feelings towards dogs or allergies. In most cases, however, it is possible to accommodate both parties as they will usually be happy to keep a distance from one another.

9. Myth: Service dogs never get time to relax and just be dogs.

Fact: Service dogs get lots of "off duty" time. They get plenty of time to rest, play with toys, play with their families and play with other dogs. Many even participate in fun recreational activities like agility, flyball, rally obedience, dock diving, disc dog, canine freestyle and more! While service dogs are more than just pets, they get tons of time to act like regular family companion dogs.

10. Myth: Service dogs are euthanised when they can no longer work.

Fact: When a service dog is no longer able to work due to age or a health problem, the dog is retired by his or her handler. Upon retiring a service dog, the hendler has various options. He or she can keep the dog as a pet or return the dog to the Programme which could adopt the dog, give the dog to the family which raised the puppy, or to a carefully screened individual or family to be a pet.

11. Myth: Service dogs have access rights in places of public accommodation.

Fact: It is the disabled handler whose rights are being protected by the ADA; not the dog's. The dog must be accompanying a disabled person and perform a task or do work that mitigates his or her handler's disability.

12. Myth: Service dogs are infallible robots.

Fact: Service dogs, while held to the highest of training standards, are still animals. With exceptional temperaments and with hours and hours of training and thorough socialisation, service dogs almost always manifest impeccable behaviour. However, slipups can happen like a distracted dog losing focus on his or her handler. The defining influence will be in how the handler responds to the minor mistakes that may occur.

13. Myth: Dogs who provide emotional comfort through companionship are service dogs.

Fact: A service dog must perform a task or do work that mitigates his or her handler's specific disability. A dog whose only job is to provide companionship for someone with a psychological disability may be designated by a mental health professional as an emotional support animal but this is not a service dog.

14. Myth: If it is not a Labrador Retriever, Golden Retriever or some other large breed, it is not a service dog.

Fact: Service dogs come in all shapes, sizes and breeds – from dogs as small as Chihuahuas to dogs as massive as Mastiffs, and almost everything in between.

15. Myth: Guide dogs know when it is safe to cross the road.

Fact: Contrary to popular belief, guide dogs cannot tell when the light is green. It is the blind handler who needs to determine when it is safe to cross by listening to the direction of the traffic. But if the handler, totaly unaware of the presence of a hybrid car making its

way into the intersection, gives the "forward" command, the guide dog is trained in what is called intelligent disobedience. The handler needs to practise this traffic technique often to keep the guide dog on its toes.

16. Myth: All puppies in the guide dog programme are suitable for guiding work.

Fact: No, not all dogs are suitable for guiding work. Selection criteria are strict as the safety of people with vision impairment is paramount.

17. Myth: Anyone can teach a dog to become a guide dog.

Fact: No. Guide dog instructors have post-graduate qualifications and extensive experience working with people who are blind or vision impaired. They are specially trained to meet International Guide Dog Federation standards.

18. Myth: It's ok for my pet dog to say "hello" to a guide dog.

Fact: No, pet dogs on or off lead can be a major distraction for a guide dog, so you should always keep your dog on lead under control in public places.

19. Myth: Only people who are totally blind have guide dogs.

Fact: No, people with varying drgrees of vision impairment can apply. Applicants are assessed on their travel needs and their ability to care for the dog on their own.

20. Myth: Finally, how does a person with impaired vision know how to toilet their guide dog?

Fact: A person with impaired vision is trained to give his or her guide dog a particular toileting command to which the dog responds.

The handlers are also shown how to dispose off "dog poo".

HALF GENITURY ACQUAINTANCE WITH LIONG TECK YAU

By Wong Kow



My friendship with Liong Teck Yau goes way back to 1968, the year when both of us were admitted to the Gurney Training Centre, the vocational training centre of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB) in Kuala Lumpur. Liong had studied in Kuala Kangsar while I received my education in Bukit Mertajam, both being the similar type of Chinese secondary school in the country. I believe that it was the similarities which we shared that had probably drawn us closer to one another in the following years.

However, Liong appeared to be more brilliant than me. We both started learning Braille as well as English and Bahasa Malaysia Braille shorthand as adult trainees but Liong was well recognised by the instructors and fellow trainees for his perseverance and for being hardworking. Indeed, learning to develop sensitivity in the finger-tips in order to read Braille and in gaining fluency in English and Malay were great challenges faced by those from the Chinese educational medium background. After overcoming these initial hurdles, Liong was able to cope well with the training. Ultimately, this enabled him to perform successfully in his position in the Government service.

With such a strong foundation in the three languages, namely Chinese, English and Bahasa Malaysia, Liong proved to be a great asset in many activities of and for the blind. When required or requested, he would help to translate or to interpret from one language to another for the benefit of members and friends.

As they say, all work and no play would certainly make life very dull and uninteresting. But Liong, with his gifted voice and his passion for singing, often provided us with great entertainment. When we were involved in carrying out some voluntary work together, Liong would often sing one or two songs to amuse us during recess or teabreak. Truly, Liong had a marvellous memory and I found it amazing in realising that he could easily memorise up to a thousand popular Chinese songs by heart.

Together with Lai Kok Keong, Godfrey Ooi and a good old number of other Chinese old song lovers, Liong helped in organising the Mandarin sing-along sessions three or four times a year at the Elderly Blind Centre of MAB. In fact, I do join the sing-along sessions now and then and I really enjoy reading the song words from the song books, several volumes of which have been compiled and produced by Liong both in Braille and in Chinese characters for the sing-along group. Until now, we have learnt up to nearly two hundred beautiful Chinese songs from Liong.

With his love for singing and for performing, Liong went on teaming up with a few blind persons sharing such a similar interest to form the Joyful Choir of the Blind (JCB). With guidance from a qualified music instructor assisted by some qualified musicians, the Choir was able to hold regular practices. After a few years, the Choir has performed in many places, including Singapore as well as in both East and West Malaysia. They have even produced a number of CDs which have received commendable support from the general public.

Furthermore, Liong was one of the founder members of the Malaysian Chinese Oldies Lovers Association. For the moment, he is still holding a key position in the organisation.

Despite his very busy schedule, Liong has never neglected loving and commitment for his family as well as caring for friends. Besides spending his quality time with family members, Liong would also visit his close friends whenever possible. He also makes an effort to visit those who are lonely at home or who are ill and hospitalised.

There are occasions when I together with Lai Kok Keong, Sek Yee Seong and Liong Teck Yau, all senior citizens, would be attending certain luncheon and dinner functions and we would be short of sighted volunteers to help. Liong, in his wise manner, would make the seating arrangements that would be convenient for the one or two volunteers available as well as for the comfort of all the diners at the table.

Indeed, I have few worries when travelling abroad with Liong for a holiday or for a tour. He would always work out a checklist beforehand and remind us what to do and what to bring along for the journey. And, of course, he would never fail to accompany us with lovely songs and funny jokes or stories almost all the way.

While Liong is a few years our junior, i.e. compared with Kok Keong and myself, we often call him "tai kor" or "big brother" as he is certainly qualified to lead us in many ways.

Bravo, Liong!

By Kiet Soon Ming

Editor's Note: At the age of twenty-seven, Kiet Soon Ming discovered that he was having difficulties with his vision. After trying in vain to overcome these difficulties for about five years, he came into contact with the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB). This helped to set him off on a new course leading to triumph and success.

Here is his inspiring story:

In those days, massage service by the blind was still very new and there were not many customers. To augment my income, therefore, I continued selling tidbits on my own. One day, I went up to the mezzanine floor of a shophouse to sell tidbits and I was unaware that the place was undergoing renovation. So I opened the door and stepped onto the mezzanine floor but there was a hole from which I immediately fell through to the floor below and I broke my kneecap and thigh bone. I had to be carried away by ambulance to the K.L. General Hospital.

In the hospital, they carried out an operation in order to remove my kneecap permanently and they fixed a screw to my thigh bone. I had to stay in the hospital for one month.

After I was discharged, I stayed at home for at least eight months. I had to go for regular physiotherapy treatment before I could walk again. During this difficult time, my sighted housemate helped me with my banking transactions. When he discovered that I had a large sum of money in my bank account (about twenty thousand ringgit), he became very jealous.

Nevertheless, my friend introduced a young sighted lady to work with me as a guide as I did not dare to go out selling tidbits on my own. We would go out in the morning and return to Brickfields in the afternoon. I would then spend the evening working as a masseur with my friend, Lee Sheng Chow, who had set up the first blind massage centre in the country.

Indeed, I got on very well with my young lady guide and our relationship was so close that we intended to get married. However, when she brought me back to her house in Muar, her family members showed displeasure and they ignored me completely. And so I brought her back to my own home in Segamat and my mother was so happy that she wanted us to get married immediately. When my family approached the girl's family to make arrangements for the marriage, they simply refused to discuss or to talk.

After our wedding, we stayed in a rented room at the back of a shophouse which was nearby and, therefore, conveniently for me to go to the massage centre where I was working. When the elder brother of my wife came to visit us, he was very unhappy to find that his sister was staying in such "horrible conditions".

Thus, I decided to take a bank loan of RM20,000 in order to purchase a flat upstairs at No. 8 Jalan Thambapillai, which actually cost me RM56,000. My two children (both daughters) were born and brought up in this flat.

In the course of my working as a masseur, I heard that a blind male masseur would likely experience sexual harassment from gay customers. Well, one day I received a house call from a schoolteacher who was married with children. On that day, he was alone in the house. While I was massaging him, he suddenly got up and started attacking me sexually. Of course, I resisted and told him not to do so as we were of the same gender. However, he insisted that I was different from him; most probably, he was a bisexual.

In 1993, I decided to go into a new venture with some friends by setting up a new blind massage centre. The total capital for the new enterprise was RM44,000. In actual fact, there were only four partners and each of us had to contribute RM11,000. The centre was in Brickfields and it became very popular, especially among the gay customers, who frequently came in groups to enjoy the sauna bath together. In the first year of our operations, we managed to reap a profit of RM70,000, which far exceeded our initial capital. Indeed, the business had met with astounding success.

With the income which I obtained from my work and from my business, I was able to look for a second property in Brickfields for investment. In 1996, I bought an apartment in the Palm Court Condominium at the cost of RM175,000. This turned out to be a very good investment as it was easy to find customers and I could get high rentals.

Unfortunately, in 1998, there was some friction between me and my partners in the massage centre. Consequently, I decided to quit the massage job altogether. Instead, I teamed up with a sighted elderly lady and we went to Singapore to sell tissue paper. Mostly we went from table to table in the various hawker centres for our customers. The earnings that I gained from this new trade proved to be even better than what I had been earning in Malaysia. However, after working for two years in Singapore, I was caught by an immigration officer for selling illegally; I was fined 150 Singapore dollars and I was barred from entering the country for a year. Since then, I have never entered the republic again.

After this unpleasant experience, I continued selling tidbits from door to door in Kuala Lumpur. Indeed, blind people selling tidbits or tissue paper were able to gain a higher income than those working as masseurs or as telephone operators. However, the blind salesmen had to work much harder and they sometimes faced humiliation. On one occasion, for example, a customer shouted loudly at me saying that he did not want to buy my tidbits. On another occasion, an elderly man used his leg to push me away from his table.

In the year of 2000, my father passed away in Segamat, Johor. Although he was quite a rich man, he was in possession of eight acres of rubber land. He willed the land to me on the grounds that I was the most unfortunate person in the family. As my only younger brother was very successful in his career, he did not wish to have any share in the family's property.

In 2002, I used my savings (which came partly from my savings and partly from my investments) to purchase my third property, which was a condominium in Cheras costing RM150,000. Two years later, we shifted from Brickfields to this new dwelling where we have been staying until today. Then, in 2015, I bought my fourth property, which was a condominium in Sungai Long.

During my leisure time, I would enjoy listening to music and I could sing the Chinese oldies quite well. One day, some of my blind friends invited me to join them busking in the Petaling Street market. I found it to be most pleasurable and I began to realise that this could be an alternative to selling tidbits in earning a living.

And so I decided to buy a tambourine and to go busking on my own. To my surprise, I found that the income I earned was even better than before. On one occasion, I went along to the Imbi Road morning market where I sang from seven to ten o'clock and I found that the money kept flowing in. In fact, for that day alone, I was able to collect about RM600 for a three-hour singing session.

However, the income earned on other days was not as good as this. Once I was singing at the LRT station but the security guard came and stopped me. I quarrelled with him and he was very rough with me.

In December 2015, I attended a workshop for buskers and musicians organised by the Dewan Bandaraya Kuala Lumpur. After three days of listening to talks and music presentations, the workshop attendees had to go through an audition. I found this to be such a great opportunity for me and my friends to perform and present our music, especially for the authorities, so that they would know that we could really sing and play musical instruments. And so at the end of the three-day session, we were considered to have passed the test and we were given the busking licence by DBKL.

Indeed, I have a message for all those unfortunate persons who have just become blind due to an accident or because of illness. I want to tell them that the world has not ended and that they can still have a bright future. When I was told by the doctor that there was no treatment which could reverse my blindness, I wasted five good years in stubbornly trying to find a cure, which always ended up in even more disappointments and greater sorrow. Very fortunately, my five years of depression and troubles ended right on the first day of my admission to the Gurney Training Centre, the vocational training institution of the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB).

At the GTC, I was able to acquire a skill which enabled me to earn a living. It helped me to realise that I still had a future ahead of me as long as I was willing to work hard by making use of the skill that I had learnt. Even until now, I frequently work for more than twelve hours each day and for seven days per week.

I am just an ordinary blind person and yet a lovely lady chose to marry me because I was hardworking and I had no vices. I have a very happy married life and we have successfully brought up two children. They have both completed their higher education and my elder daughter has even gone to the United Kingdom to further her studies.

My wife jointly owns all the four properties which I had acquired with the money that I had earned from my own sweat and tears and that I had worked so hard to save. Nowadays, I am taking life more easy and both me and my wife do often follow the trips and holiday tours organised by the Malaysian Association for the Blind (MAB).

HOLIDAY ON THE HIGH SEAS

By Loh Kong Ken



Going on a cruise had been on my bucket list for some time. Unfortunately, when I brought up the idea to my wife, Kam Lin, a few years ago, she wasn't keen as she feared going on a boat or a plane. So I dropped the idea.

However, early this year I was surprised when my wife asked me whether I would be interested in going for a cruise. Of course, i said yes and so we began making arrangements for the cruise in early April 2018.

We started asking friends whether they would like to join us. Within a week, we managed to get a group of 22 persons comprising ten sighted friends and twelve visually impaired persons for the cruise.

In the blink of an eye, the day for boarding the ship was upon us – it was Friday, 30th November 2018. It was a 4-day 3-night cruise from Port Klang to Penang to Singapore and back to Port Klang. The cost was RM1,600 per person but because we were among those who booked the cruise well in advance, we were given a discount of RM100. The passage included a twinsharing cabin, five meals per day and the use of the facilities on board.

Our ship was called Costa Fortuna, a 15-year old ship from Italy. It had its inaugural voyage on 25th November 2003. In fact, it berthed at Singapore Marina Bay to take in the first group of passengers from this region on 29th November 2018. The ship's captain was Nocolantonio Palombella. Passengers who wished to attend a cocktail party with the captain were required to fill up a form in order to receive the special invitation. None from our group took the trouble to do so.

The main features of Costa Fortuna were as follows:

Propulsion power: 40,000 KW;

Cruising speed: 20 knots (max 22);

Gross register tonnage: 1,025,877 tons;

Length from bow (front) to stern (back): 272.19 metres (893 feet);

Width from portside (left) to starboard (right): 35.5 metres (116.46 feet);

Maximum draught stabilisers – 8.3 metres (27.23 feet);

Number of decks – 17 of which 13 are for guests to use;

Crew complement – 1,027;

Maximum guest capacity – 3,470;

Double occupancy capacity – 2,702 cabins;

Electrical current - 220/110 volts.





Day 1 - Boarding at Port Klang

Our group arrived at West Port in two vans at around 1.30 pm on Friday, 30th November 2018. We had to wait until 3 pm before we were able to board the ship as our tour leader had to make arrangements for checking our luggage and for processing our documentation with the immigration.

Upon boarding the Costa Fortuna, we were escorted to our cabins immediately. We were informed that afternoon tea will be on Deck 9 at 4 pm. Then most of us were assigned to either Deck 6 or Deck 7 while Albert and Ho Siew Wah were assigned to Deck 1. The irony was that all the blind had either a partially sighted person or a sighted helper to assist them except for both of them who were totally blind.

My first surprise came the moment I unlocked my cabin. I discovered that it was rather spacious and the bed was a king-size bed. The television was turned on and it was tuned to the station which was announcing the evacuation procedures in case of an emergency. Prior to our cruise, I had been told by friends who had been on other cruises that the cabin was very small and the bed was very narrow.

Following the afternoon tea, the public address announcement said that those who had just boarded the ship were required to attend a briefing concerning evacuation procedures on Deck 3 for the English-speaking and on Deck 5 for the Mandarin-speaking at 5 pm. Attendance would be taken during the briefing. Those who don't turn up will be issued with a letter cautioning them to attend the next briefing on the following day.

Personally, I felt glad that the management did take the safety of the passengers seriously. Unfortunately, the majority of the passengers took the evacuation procedures lightly and chose not to attend, including some friends in our group, despite the reminder letter.

For the afternoon tea, we had noodles, fried rice, cakes, buns, pies and various types of pastries as well as a variety of fresh fruits. I particularly enjoyed the chocolate cake which was covered with a thick slab of chocolate. Branded English tea was served.

The ship set sail for Penang at 6 pm. As our tour leader had booked our dinner for 8.30 pm on Deck 4, Kam Lin and I went for a walk on Deck 3 as well as to get some information on wifi access and to register our credit card.

My surprise came when I learnt that there was no free wifi access despite the fact that the cruise was an international standard cruise. I had to pay 18 US dollars (about RM75) in order to obtain a pass to access the wifi connection. I would say that the rate was reasonable though. Unfortunately, the wifi access was not very stable. At times, I could not get any connection at all for at least half to one hour.

Moreover, we had assumed that since the wifi access pass cost 18 US dollars from the first to the last day, it would go cheaper by the day. This was not the case, however. One of our friends, Ho Siew Wah, decided to get the wifi access pass on the second day but he still had to pay 18 US dollars for it.

Dinner was served at 8.30 pm. It was a sit-down seven-course western fine dining dinner, with a starter followed by an appetiser, salad, soup, noodles/rice, the main course and dessert accompanied by a live performance.

Basically, five meals were served each day, namely buffet breakfast, buffet lunch, afternoon tea, 7-course fine dining dinner and supper. The first three meals were served on Deck 3 and 9, dinner on Deck 3 and 4, and supper on Deck 9. All the meals were walk-in meals except for dinner, where we had to book our tables either for 6.30 pm or 8.30 pm.



By the time we finished our dinner, it was already 10 pm. So Kam Lin and I decided to take a walk around Deck 3, 4 and 5 where there were live performances going on. Those who love disco could dance to their hearts' content on Deck 4.

Day 2 - Penang

It was a very smooth cruise all the way from Port Klang West Port to the Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal (SPCT) where the ship berthed at around 6 am. Except for the engine noise, we could not feel that the ship was moving at all. Despite this, I only slept for about an hour throughout the night. As a result, I decided to go back to sleep after breakfast as I did not plan to go ashore.

At around 8 am, ten friends from our group prepare themselves to go on shore. Before I could go back to my cabin, however, Albert asked me to join him touring round the ship with the help of a crew member. Kam Lin and Siew Wah also decided to join our tour starting from top to bottom. Our guide named Raphael was from Philippines.

In summary, this is what we concluded. On Deck 13 in the radar room and the helipad for evacuation purposes and emergencies.

Deck 12 was an open deck for sun bathing or for star gazing. It also contained a children's pool.



Deck 11 had a gymnasium, a jacuzzi and a handful of cabins while Deck 10 had a swimming pool for adults, a gymnasium, a jacuzzi, a fine dining restaurant for paying customers only and some cabins.

Deck 9 contained two swimming pools, two restaurants, two jacuzzis at the bow and two jacuzzis on mid-ship while Deck 6, 7 and 8 contained cabins for the passengers.

Deck 3, 4 and 5 contained the information counter, restaurants, discotheques, cafes, a casino, a chapel, several boutique shops selling leather goods like handbags, shoes and belts, clothes, liquor, chocolates and souvenirs and a three-tiered theatre that could seat 2,000 persons.



Deck 1 and 2 contained cabins for passengers, Deck 0 had a clinic and laundrette, Deck A and B contained cabins for the crew, while Deck C was the engine room.

After the tour, we returned to our cabin for a short rest before having an early lunch at 12 noon. As quite a number of the passengers had gone ashore and other passengers from Penang had yet to board the ship, the restaurant was quite empty. I enjoyed a bowl of soup with some vegetables, a plate of grilled salmon and some fruit without rice.

At this juncture, let me point out that on learning that there were 12 blind passengers on board, the captain had given instructions to the crew to assist the blind in whatever way possible. Thus, each time we entered the restaurant, we had no difficulty in getting the crew to serve us. In addition, we were assigned one of the crew to take care of us in case of emergency. Moreover, all the cabins and lifts were labelled in Braille and the lifts were talking lifts.

After lunch I went back to my cabin to catch some sleep while Kam Lin went to Deck 3 to chat with two friends from the KL Wesley Church. They were May Leong Mei Hoon and Hiew Lee Ching. This was the first time both of them had ever joined a blind group for any activities and they had adjusted themselves remarkably with the blind group.

The ship left SPCT for Singapore at around 2 pm. No matter how hard I tried, I just couldn't fall asleep. At around 3 pm, I took a call via the intercom from Lee Ah Chan, a blind friend who was looking for Kam Lin. Apparently, his wife, Lim Guat Cheng, was not feeling well and he needed someone to help bring her to the clinic.

As I had no means of reaching Kam Lin, I called up the clinic to check whether they could render any assistance. Unfortunately, I was told that if we were to bring Guat Cheng to the clinic, we would have to pay 140 US dollars for consultation. On the other hand, if the doctor were to go to the cabin to make the house call, the rate would be 178 US dollars.

I conveyed the information to Ah Chan and told him that it would not be worth the while as it did not include the medication charges. I suggested asking among our friends whether they had some on the counter medication. After making several attempts, it turned out that Mary See, a long-time friend, had some medicine that could help.

Then at around 4 pm, Ah Chan called me again saying that Guat Cheng's condition was getting worse and that she had to go to the clinic. I tried to call Mary See but she was not in her cabin. Fortunately, Kam Lin then came back to the cabin and I related to her about Guat Cheng's condition.

After hearing this, Kam Lin got hold of Lee Ching and they went to see Guat Cheng. At about 6 pm, Kam Lin returned to the cabin to freshen up for dinner. She said that Guat Cheng had been admitted to the sick bay for observation. It turned out that Guat Cheng was just dehydrated and she was given some drip at the sick bay.

At dinner, Guat Cheng was there waiting together with Lee Ching who was pushing her on a wheelchair. Guat Cheng was feeling normal again and she received further good news that the doctor had only charged her RM110 US dollars for the whole treatment.

After dinner, Kam Lin and I walked around Deck 3 and enjoyed the live band performance. We then went to the outer deck to enjoy the breeze and the sound of the Breaking waves. The wind was blowing strongly, the sea was rather choppy and the waves were high. We could hear the waves lapping loudly on the side of the ship.

We then went to Deck 4 to watch fellow passengers dancing vigorously at the discotheque as the DJ shouted out instructions to the dancers. We did not stay long on Deck 4 as it was too noisy and instead we decided to check out the casino on Deck 5. The place was full of gamblers and beside the casino there was a coffee house where some passengers were enjoying the coffee and listening to a live band performance. A trans-gender was singing and so we stayed for a while to listen to a couple of songs before turning in for the night. We wanted to wake up fresh for a Sunday service among ourselves in the chapel at 8 am.

Day 3 – to Singapore

We arose early at around 6.30 am to prepare ourselves for the Sunday service. It was organised by Dorothy Wong after learning that there was a chapel on Deck 4. Before the service, Kam Lin and I together with our colleague, Mr. Subramaniam and his wife, went for a hot drink on Deck 3 where we had planned to have our breakfast after the service.

We were in the chapel at 7.45 am. There were a couple of fellow passengers inside having their quiet time. So we waited until 8 am before starting the service.

Ho Siew Wah was supposed to lead the praise and worship session but, as he was late, Dorothy had to step in instead. Towards the end of the worship session, however, Siew Wah showed up with his entourage of four persons. Apparently, they were having their breakfast and were, therefore, late.

Nevertheless, Kam Lin, Eddy Chong and Siew Wah had the opportunity to share their testimonies. This was followed by a short message by May Leong of the KL Wesley Church after which Lee Ching closed with the closing prayer. The service ended before 9 am and there were 14 of us at the service.

We then adjourned to the restaurant for breakfast. It was very crowded and so we had to split up into three tables. May, Lee Ching, Eddy and his wife,

Siow Ling, Kam Lin and myself were in one table. We had a wonderful time having fellowship together. Eddy and Siow Ling shared their life story with us until 11 am before we all went our separate ways.

As we were required to assemble on Deck 3 before 2 pm for disembarkation at the Singapore Marina Bay in order to stamp our passports, we had an early lunch. I had corned beef, tuna fish, vegetables, fruits and a bowl of soup. I particularly enjoyed the corned beef and tuna fish and I had to stop myself from having too much.

We were on Deck 3 by 1.15 pm. It was very noisy and crowded and some people were disembarking at the end of their cruise. Others were going on shore for a short tour, shopping or meeting with relatives and friends. The rest of us were forced to disembark just to stamp our passports as required by the Singaporean authority.

Eight persons from our group were among those who planned to go ashore. The remaining 14 of us had to wait until 3 pm before we were allowed to go on shore.

Once again, it was May and Lee Ching who came to our rescue. May was leading in front while Lee Ching was at the back as the sweeper. After stamping our passports to go in, we had to wait for an hour at the immigration before we could have our passports stamped again to leave Singapore.

By the time we boarded the Costa Fortuna again, it was nearly 5 pm. Straight away, we went for our afternoon tea and I had my favourite chocolate cake and chicken pie. Actually, we had wasted a total of four unfruitful hours going on shore and back just to comply with the Singaporean authority's wishes.

After our afternoon tea, we returned to our cabins to rest before dinner in the Raphael Restaurant at 8.30 pm. For the previous two nights, we had our dinner at the Michael Angelo Restaurant.

At this juncture, allow me to point out that actually the ship's management had lined up various activities on various decks for the passengers to join in

apart from the evacuation drill. Every night a programme sheet was delivered to our cabin listing all the activities on board for the next day starting from 7 am to 11 pm. For every hour, there would be an activity going on. It would begin with the aerobic exercise at 7 am followed by other activities such as the dancing class, flower arrangement class, a talk on health, story-telling and colouring session for children, handicrafts, theatre and many more. The passengers were free to join in any activities they fancied.

One of the activities that I loved was a talk on the interpretation of the footprint for health purposes. Unfortunately, no one else was interested and so I just let it pass!

Eventually, the ship left Singapore for Port Klang at 8 pm. We had our dinner at 8.30 pm and it was over nearly 10 pm. Kam Lin and I walked around the ship until 11 pm before turning in for the night.

Day 4 - Disembarking at Port Klang

We woke up at 5.30 am as we had been told to check our credit card statement at the service counter on Deck 5. Those who needed to get the balance of their deposit were required to do the same. The counter would be open by 6 am. By the time we reached Deck 5, there was already a very long queue. Fortunately, we were subsequently informed that the statement for credit card users had been deposited into the letterbox before our cabin door. So we returned to our cabin for the statement.

We then went for our breakfast. As we were disembarking passengers, we were assigned to a separate restaurant. I am not sure whether it was a lousy chef who did the cooking or because we were disembarking passengers, all the food that we had were too salty. The meal consisted of sausages, scrambled eggs, chocolate cakes, fruits and juice.

Then we had to assemble on Deck 3 for disembarkation by 8 am. A crew member was assigned to assist us. By 9 am, however, we were still waiting. Fortunately, all of us had a place to sit. Later, we were told to go to Deck 1 to wait.

On Deck 1 there were no chairs and so we all had to stand. We learned that originally the ship was supposed to berth at West Port. Unfortunately, no berth was available. Thus, the Costa Fortuna was diverted to North Port. Although the ship managed to berth, we were not allowed to disembark until the Malaysian Immigration gave the signal to do so.

Apparently, we were waiting for the Immigration officers and the shuttle buses to arrive. At 10 am, we were the first group to disembark Costa Fortuna for the last time. All the disembarking passengers were herded into the waiting buses to be escorted by the outrider police and immigration officers to the Immigration Complex at West Port for clearance.

The Immigration clearance went on smoothly. However, we were told that we had to wait for our luggage from North Port. Once again, May Leong and Lee Ching came to our rescue. Both of them waited for our luggage to arrive while we waited in the van which would take us back to Brickfields. Finally, we reached Brickfields at around 12.45 pm.

Before I conclude, allow me to narrate an incident aboard the Costa Fortuna that can be a lesson for all of us.

Early in the morning while the ship was still cruising towards SPCT on the high seas, Siew Wah noticed that his mobile phone had a very strong signal. The display showed full bar and it stated MPC. He was very happy and, without hesitation, he placed a call to Linda Kam in Brickfields. He spoke for about ten minutes. Later, he received a call from Ng Wei Lan that lasted for a few minutes.

After breakfast, Siew Wah placed a call to his service provider as it was free and he was curious to know what MPC meant.



The moment the customer service answered his call, the officer asked Siew Wah whether he was on a cruise. Siew Wah was shocked to hear that. He then asked about the meaning of MPC and was told that it stood for Marine Partner's Communication. According to the customer officer, the rate for making a call via MPC is RM18 per minute while receiving a call would be RM23 per minute.

The officer added that to serve on the net, it would cost RM100 per mb. He said that it is super expensive to use the MPC service.

Indeed, the cost incurred by Siew Wah in making and receiving the call came up to RM386. As for Larry Teh, he was more fortunate because he only received a call from K. K. Goh which cost him RM18.

In conclusion, I must say that I did enjoy the cruise very much. In fact, all who came along also enjoyed the cruise. I would certainly not mind going for another cruise if I had the funds.

On behalf of the blind friends in our tour, I would like to thank all our sighted friends for all the assistance they had rendered without any expectation of payment. Worthy of mention in particular are May Leong and Lee Ching from the KL Wesley Church.

Thank you.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A WILL

By Ivan Ho Tuck Choy

Editor's Note: There are many who may not be aware of the need to draw up a will so that their money, property and other belongings of any worth can be dispensed within a satisfactory manner after they pass away. Ivan Ho would, therefore, like to give an explanation concerning the importance of a will, especially for the benefit of our blind and visually impaired readers. If you have further ideas to elaborate on this topic, you are most welcome to send in your articles for publication in the magazine.

Here is the explanation by Ivan Ho Tuck Choy:

1. What is a will?

It is a serious document written by a person when he/she is alive and in control of his/her thinking power, stating clearly what would happen to his/her property upon death.

2. Why must I make a will?

Do you have a will upon which your next of kin – wife, husband, father, mother, brother or sister – can make a claim by showing legal documents such as a marriage certificate, birth or identity documents. If you have no such relations, then nobody can claim your property and eventually it will go to the Public Trustees. If, after some years, nobody comes forward to claim it, then it will be the property of the Malaysian Government.

3. Is a verbal promise adequate?

I do not have a will but I have told my friend I will give my property to him/her upon my death — is it all right? Actually, in law, everything must be in writing and signed or fingerprinted. The dead person will not be around to bear witness to the friend who says the property had been willed to him/her. He/she must show the document, and that is the will.

4. Can I change my will every year?

Yes, you may but be sure that the other wills are destroyed so that they will not cause confusion. Remember, the dead person will not be around to clear the confusion created by confusing wills.

5. Must I tell the person I am willing the property to?

That is not necessary. In actual fact, it is better not to tell unless you are VERY VERY sure you will not change your mind and make new wills. It is always wise to keep your will together with your other documents in a place where people can find it upon your death. Furthermore, it is good to have a duplicate copy kept with a trusted person (your priest, lawyer or such other people) in case you have someone not on good terms with you and he/she destroys that copy of the will, and nobody will ever find it. (Most people keep such documents in a safe deposit box in a bank).

6. How can I write my will?

Anyone will always advise you to see your lawyers in drawing up legal documents like the will. Actually, anyone who knows what to write in a will and can find people to consult about certain matters, he can help you write the will. The will must contain all the important points – your name, your NRIC number, your address, what property, what portion, what amount of money you have, in what bank and the account number, who do you want to give to, his/her full name and NRIC numbers (if more than one person), what percentage, who gets what, etc.

In the case of your Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) savings, the authorities will honour only the names written in the nomination form you submitted to them. So do remember to update that form if there are changes to your beneficiaries.

7. If my friend helps me to write the will, is it a legal document?

After writing down all the important particulars, your will must be signed or fingerprinted in front of a witness or witnesses. Then you take the will to the stamping office and have it stamped for a few ringgit for each copy. The stamping must be done within 30 days of drawing up the will. For instance, if your will is dated 2nd October 2018, you must have it stamped by 2nd November; otherwise you will have to pay a fine.

8. What must I now do?

You must make up your mind, as soon as possible, what property you have and to whom you want to give and in what portion. You may have another fifty years to live or you may not; so act when you have the time. Once you know what and who to give, then the person helping you would write down all the particulars, and then read and explain to you before you sign.

9. If I ask my friend (Thomas) to write the will, does he know everything?

He might not know everything but he can always consult people with legal background to help him. Of course, the easiest thing to do is to give everything to a lawyer. But you must sit in front of him/her and tell him/her everything before he/she can complete the will. You then pay him/her a fee.

Well, so I have given you basically all that you need to do in order to secure a will for the benefit of your loved ones before you leave this world. So happy will writing!



By Moses Choo Siew Cheong Executive Director National Council for the Blind, Malaysia

Hand-held digital recorders have been around for more than 20 years or so. You can use these convenient little devices to dictate notes or capture information like a phone number, and they are so easy to carry around in your pocket.

However, most of these digital recorders don't speak to the user at all. For example, if you want to change a setting in a menu such as the quality of recording or the microphone sensitivity, you would have to memorise a sequence of commands which you will have difficulty in remembering, especially at the time when you need it.

Secondly, once someone has finished a recording, the audio file can be played or deleted but it can never be changed.

Well, here is the good news. Olympus has released a series of talking digital recorders, one of which is the Eltrinex V12Pro talking digital recorder with its excellent voice guidance capability. Indeed, most of the menu items will talk. For example, when you turn the recorder on, you will hear the level of the battery charge – high, medium or low.

All menu items and settings are verbalised with its voice guidance system. You can set the date and time and specify whether the time is expressed with a twelve-hour or twenty-four hour clock.

Also, for each recording that is created, you can add information to the beginning of the recording, i.e. the label, or to the end of the recording, i.e. appending to the original recording.

For each recording that you create, you can hear the file number in the folder where the recording is saved, how much time the recording takes, and how many more hours of recording time you have left. You can protect

or unprotect each recording using speech output alone, without any visual assistance needed. The same applies if you want to know the charge in the battery. Furthermore, you can independently move or copy individual recordings from one folder to another.

On the negative side, however, the Eltrinex V12Pro takes about eight seconds to power up before you can start recording. When a recording is stopped or deleted, the V12Pro takes about eight seconds to return to its normal operating mode.

The price of the Eltrinex V12Pro is US\$169.95 and it is sold in the United States by LS&S Products.

You can contact the company at their website: https://www.talking-recorder.com/ or by phone: 800-468-4789.

A POINT TO PONDERS MONEY AND MONEY GAMES PART III

By Wong Kow

There are numerous multi-level sales schemes in the market nowadays. Some of them introduce rather expensive products such as a pack of powder from unknown sources, a bottle of capsules which can cure all manner of illnesses, and so on.

In actual fact, these substances could be of very little value or have no usefulness at all to the user. Those who sign up as "early bird" members may make handsome profits if they are able to introduce the products to more friends, relatives and colleagues.

However, my question is however can all these expensive products really cure all sicknesses. I guess only the clear and conscious mind could give the answer.

Indeed, there are investment schemes with such beautiful names as Investment for Gold, Investment for Diamonds or for some other precious stones. However, some of these companies probably do not possess any of these items or they may have no transactions at all with these items.

So the investors who pay a large amount of money to join as members may only be holding a piece of paper written with some "empty promises" of wonderful investment returns. However, the investors do not actually understand the day-to-day activities of the company. They are not aware that the interest which they earn depend very much on luck or that they are at the mercy of the investment company.

Everyone knows that it is illegal to print money. And yet you will probably have heard that there are magicians who can turn a piece of blank paper into "real money". Should you be witness with your own eyes that the piece of paper has turned into "newly printed money" and that you could buy things without being rejected by the shopkeeper, you will surely be amazed.

But just imagine for a moment about the function of an old manual typewriter. Insert a piece of paper into the typewriter and roll the paper around the roller until it appears at the right spot for typing. If the roller is big enough, one could first insert a piece of money before inserting the paper. Thus, when one inserts the paper and turns the roller, the money which has already been inserted inside will be rolled out first. Undoubtedly, that piece of money is "real money". So would you still believe that the special liquid or machine could turn a piece of blank paper into "real money"? Therefore, beware that a swindler or the so-called magician could do a much more convincing job in deceiving his prey than my unprofessional description in just a few lines.

Nevertheless, I have great pleasure in sharing my humble and unqualified opinion as follows:

- 1. Some may think that gambling with a little money can be a hobby. However, when it becomes a habit, it can become addictive and easily spin out of control and lead to heavy losses.
- 2. When you come across any investment plan that is too good to be true, give yourself a second thought. Consult your spouse, friends or relatives. When the introducer tells you to take advantage of the "early bird" offers, privileges and other benefits and that "today is the last day for such and such a scheme", be alert that it may be a scam. My advice is that you better miss the boat than commit yourself to a scheme without knowing what you are actually doing.

If the so-called investment company does not have any proper business transactions but merely depends solely on membership, then where does the money come from to pay for the high interest or profits? They collect a substantial amount of money from newcomers in order to pay high returns to the few members who had joined earlier.

Sooner or later, when the recruitment plan stops, the whole scheme will collapse. The leaders will escape with millions of ringgit and the "early birds" may be able to recover their capital and perhaps some profits. As for the tens of thousands of other members, they will lose their entire capital without any returns.

- 3. If a long-lost friend, former colleague or classmate should suddenly manage to contact you and purposely flaunts his wealth, he may be trying to convince you to join his "get rich" plans. If he keeps inviting you to grand lunch or dinner parties, be aware and be on guard to protect yourself.
- 4. When an "investment company" claims to be dealing with precious stones but it does not actually possess, buy or sell such products physically, then where do the high interest returns or luxurious offers come from? Even if you may be lucky enough to get some profits, it is most probably at the expense of the unlucky ones.
- 5. Dreams that can make you feel great. However, if you do have wonderful dreams to make more money, please remember to wake up at the right moment.

Get the right person to cooperate or collaborate in making it a real success. Beware of irresponsible people who may drag your sweet dream down into the monsoon drain! I sincerely wish that your dreams will come true.

Indeed, we do often hear that money cannot buy happiness. Someone may even say that money is the root to all evil. In actual truth, however, with an adequate income to live independently, money can certainly give you the feeling of security; you are less frantic and you have few worries. It is, therefore, of utmost importance for one to be able to earn money in the right way and to handle it in a wise manner.

Finally, I would like to conclude with this quotation – "The greatest legacy one can pass on to his children or grandchildren is not money or material things accumulated in one's life, but rather a legacy of good character and faith".

UNILOCKING THE SECRETS OF NATURE

By Dr. Gordon Tan Tok Shiong

Editor's Note: Dr. Gordon Tan Tok Shiong has been visually impaired from childhood and he was a lecturer on Economics at the University of Malaya for many years. After retiring in the 1990s, he loves to spend his time observing how the blind live and work and he has contributed articles on this theme for the magazine.

Now he has turned his mind to some other interests and has thus come up with a very interesting article concerning unlocking of the secrets of nature.

Here it is:

For thousands of years, human beings have been wondering about their origins, how all living things came into being, how the earth and millions of stars came to be formed, and so on. Doubtlessly, this world is full of wonders – we have plants which can produce gorgeous flowers and sumptuous fruits, animals that can show love and tender care to their young ones, and the planet earth which is endowed with all the necessities essential for life such as oxygen, sunshine and water. Human beings are also awed by the destructive might of nature as manifested in its earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, cyclones, floods and the asteroid impacts.

Compared to animals, the human being has a much bigger brain mass and he has thus been endowed with greater mental capability, thereby enabling him to take up intellectual pursuits like education and music as well as to socialise and to worship. With his reasoning ability, the curiosity of wanting to know has been aroused and the questing spirit has thus been awakened in him to embark upon the long and tedious search to unlock the secrets of nature.

Thus, man has for long been delving into the question with regards to the origin of life – where do human beings and other living things and even the earth come from? In fact, we are able to know about our past or what has happened in the past by looking at the records in nature known as the Fossil Record. Fossils are the remains of organisms which once lived on earth and they have been buried inside the sedimentary rocks below the ground.

The sedimentary rocks exist in layers and those layers further down in the ground must be older than those layers above them. By dint of reasoning, therefore, it is logical to conclude that the bottom-most layer of rocks must be the oldest in time. Based on this knowledge, we can, therefore, precisely calculate the age of these rocks by analysing the radioactive chemicals inside them.

Scientists have discovered that the radioactive material in the ground decays at a constant rate as it is unaffected by external considerations such as temperature, pressure and other environmental factors. The level and rate of decay can, therefore, serve as a clock to measure the time since the fossil was formed until the present.

Thus, the fossil record has revealed to us the history of life on earth. Living organisms began to appear on earth about 3.8 billion years ago. These are simple one-celled organisms such as the bacteria and archaea.

After one billion years have elapsed, i.e. 2.8 billion years ago, some of these simple one-cell organisms became more complex and evolved into multicelled organisms. After another lapse of 1.5 billion years, i.e. 530 million years ago, these organisms grew in size and some of them evolved into fishes.

Then about 370 million years ago, the plants which originated in the seas began to appear on the dry land and they grew into forests. At the same time, the sea animals also began to make their way onto the land and some of the fishes evolved into frogs and toads.

About 320 million years ago, the living organisms began to use lungs for breathing and the reptiles appeared. About 225 million years ago, the dinosaurs appeared.

About 200 million years ago, the living organisms moved another step forward by evolving into warm-blooded creatures, i.e. the mammals.

Then about 2.5 million years ago, some of the great apes evolved into the Genus Homo, which is our ancestor. About 200 thousand years ago, the first human beings started walking on earth.

The universe that we live in has billions of galaxies, each of which has billions of stars. In fact, our sun is merely one of the stars in our galaxy called the Milky Way.

Indeed, the physical size of the universe is enormous. And yet the universe is still expanding continuously, with the galaxies moving away from each other rapidly. We know this because the light waves from other galaxies which reached the earth have "stretched-out" wavelengths. Now, after measuring the rate of expansion of the universe, and by going backward in time and reducing the size of the universe by the same rate, our universe will be just as small as a dot 13.7 billion years ago. In other words, at that time the universe was merely a point where an explosion occurred; this explosion is known as The Big Bang from which the universe was born.

The question now is whether we are able to go back to the distant past, which is billions of years ago, and witness for ourselves the occurrence of the creation of the universe. Well, the answer surprisingly is yes – this is because as human beings, we do possess a kind of time machine which allows us to go back to the distant past in order to see what actually took place.

Now how does this time machine work? The answer is quite simple – we know that light travels at a constant speed of approximately 300 thousand kilometres per second. Early in the morning, if you are able to gaze at the sun rising from the horizon, the image is actually that of the sun of eight minutes ago. This is because the sun is 150 million kilometres away from the earth and it, therefore, takes eight minutes for the light of the sun to reach us on earth.

In fact, the star nearest to our solar system is Proxima Centauri, and it is 40 trillion kilometres away from earth. At that distance, the light takes 4.22 years to reach Earth. Thus, when we see the star, Proxima Centauri, we are actually seeing something which is 4.22 years ago.

Actually, the bigger the telescope that we have, the further into the sky we can see; therefore, the images that we see will be even more distant in the past.

Human beings are now building bigger and bigger telescopes so that they can see further and further into the past. To date, the most advanced telescope that we have is the Hubble space telescope. With this telescope, we are able to see the galaxies that are 13.2 billion light years away from earth. In other words, we are actually seeing the images that had existed 13.2 billion years ago when the universe was still very young – you could say just like a two and a half year old toddler.

When a bomb is exploded at a distance, you are able to know that the explosion has occurred even though you did not see it; this is because you were able to hear the noise of the explosion, Similarly, when the universe expanded from a single point 13.7 billion years ago, we are able to know that there must have been an explosion.

Today, in fact, the echoes of this explosion are still everywhere in the universe. Scientists call this phenomenon the cosmic background radiation. You can detect this occurrence by using a radio equipped with a very large supersensitive antenna.

Of course, the scientific community is particularly strict when classifying an explanation as knowledge; the explanation must have persuasive mathematical reasoning and there must be overwhelming physical evidence to support the explanation. Therefore, the acquisition of knowledge by scientists has been and continues to be difficult, painstaking and laborious.

Indeed, such efforts have been very encouraging and rewarding. Almost every parent today will send their children to school and to university in order to learn from this stock of knowledge. Hence, gone are the days when human beings relied solely on beliefs and myths in order to find the explanations about the secrets of nature.

REFLECTIONS

Malcolm Forbes

Publisher Malcolm Forbes noted that diversity is "the art of thinking independently together".

Vincent Van Gogh

Artist Vincent Gogh explained that "great things are done by a series of small things brought together".

Aristotle

Aristotle is credited for observing that "the whole is greater than the sum of its parts".

This philosophical musing has now been applied in almost every aspect of life – from the Gestalt psychological theory that "the whole is something else than the sum of its parts" to applications in psychology, economics and theology.

Dr. Kenneth Jernigan

At a convention of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in Dallas, Texas in the 1990s, Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, President of NFB, spoke about "the nature of independence". Subsequently, some students wrote to him asking why, as a leader in the NFB and as a proponent of cane travel skills, he had been noticed moving through the hotel with a guide.

Dr. Jernigan explained that while skills like cane travel and fluency in Braille are key, the core meaning of independence is the ability to go where you want when you want without inconvenience to yourself or others and to get the information you need with the minimum of inconvenience or expense.

Jernigan said, "our independence comes from within and it depends on our self-respect, confidence, our will and our ability to make choices."

SOME HUMOUROUS TIDBUS

MISINTERPRETATION REGARDING CONFIDENTIALITY

A man had shot dead seven people and then himself. The police found out that when the man was at university, he had been given counselling to help him overcome his tendency to resort to violence in order to solve problems.

However, the man's case had not been referred to the police because his file had been marked "confidential".

CALL FOR HELP

After lunch a social worker was strolling by the swimming pool and saw a man drowning. "Why doesn't he ask for help?" He wondered.

Finally, when the drowning man shouted, "help!", it was too late to save him.

THE DRIVER AND THE PROFESSOR

A professor always gave talks accompanied by his driver. Unlike other drivers, this one liked to sit at the back of the hall to listen and take notes.

One day the professor fell ill and thought of cancelling the talk. The driver told him not to because he could take over as he had listened to the professor's talks so many times.

At the talk, the driver delivered the talk while the professor sat behind. The driver could answer all the questions very well until someone asked a very strange question.

He said, "This question is very simple. Even my driver at the back there can answer it."

FISHING

A fisherman would always measure the fish he caught. One day a group of Australian tourists saw him doing that and asked him why he would measure the fish and then throw them back into the water.

The fisherman explained that if the fish was more than twelve inches long, he would throw it back into the water.

"Why?" They asked.

The fisherman replied, "My frying pan is twelve inches in diameter. Any fish less than twelve inches can easily fit into the pan to cook. I don't need to cut it."

HOME HEALTH TIPS

- 1. Take pills with a cup of water while standing; after swallowing, stand for at least 1 to 2 minutes so the pill can go down esophagus easily.
- 2. Floss to relieve yourself of toothpaste.
- 3. When suffering from motion sickness in the air, sea or car, focus on distant rather than nearby objects or take capsules containing powdered ginger root.
- 4. To prevent backache, work at surfaces of proper height. E.g. the ironing board.
- 5. Cold first, heat later this is the best rule for treating sprains, strains and other injuries. The cold relieves pain, minimises swelling, relaxes muscles or reduces spasm; heat later relieves pain and spasm and aids repair by increasing blood circulation.

Note that if heat is used immediately after hurt, it will increase inflammation and may cause bleeding.

- 6. Bran slows intestinal movement when having diarrhoea and speeds up movement when constipation. Should take things like brown rice.
- 7. To remove tick in the skin, cover the pest with fingernail polish or petroleum jelly; the tick will release hold and back out.
- 8. If insect is in the ear, turn towards the sun or the light because insects are attracted to brightness.

SOME QUOTATIONS

Winston Churchill We make a living by what we get; we make a life by

what we give.

Unknown We don't grow when things are easy. We grow when

we face challenges.

Walt Disney The way to get started is to quit talking and begin

doing.

Maya Angelou We may encounter many defeats but we must not be

defeated.

Will Rogers Don't let yesterday take up too much of today.

FDR The only limit to our realisation of tomorrow will be

our debts of today.

Albert Einstein Creativity is intelligence having fun.

Unknown Control the way you respond – that's power!

Marianne Joy is what happens to us when we allow ourselves to

recognise

Williamson how good things really are.

Roger Caras Dogs are not our whole life, but they make our lives

whole.

Anonymous You cannot change the direction of the wind but you can

adjust the sail.

Mark Zuckerberg The biggest risk is not taking any risk.

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

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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

ORGANISATIONS, 2018- 2020

World Blind Union/ World Blind Union Asia Pacific (WBU/WBUAP)

Dato' Dr. Hsiung Kwo Yeun and Mr Moses Choo Siew Cheong

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.

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