



Kampong Echo

Persatuan Rakyat Malaysia di Perancis
Association des Malaisiens en France
Malaysian Association in France

Oct-Nov-Dec 2003
Vol. 4/03

Message from MAF

MAF would like to thank all members for the support given to the association throughout the year. The successful events we had were due to your endless support and participation. We hope you would keep up this spirit and continue to volunteer for the association.

MAF's next event will be the Annual General Meeting (AGM) that will be held on Saturday, 17 January 2004 at 4 p.m. at Rumah Malaysia. We hope to see all of you there.

We wish all our members of the Christian faith a Merry Christmas, and "du bonheur, de la santé et de la prospérité à vous tous pour l'année 2004 !"

UPCOMING EVENTS

MAF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM)
Date: Saturday, 17 January 2004
Venue : Rumah Malaysia, 48 boulevard Suchet, 75116 Paris.
Metro: la Muette
Bus: PC 1 (Bus stop : Porte de Passy)
Time : 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

**All events and dates are subject to change. Please check MAF website regularly at www.maf.online.fr or with a member of the Committee.*

Editorial Board

Halida halida@noos.fr
Bakhtiar fendi@alumni.princeton.edu
Affendy fnd@fnd-fnd.com
Tye Soon Kwai tyesk@club-internet.fr
Melissa winter_spring76@voila.fr



**SELAMAT HARI
NATAL &
SELAMAT TAHUN
BARU 2004**

OUTGOING EVENTS

DEEPAVALI CELEBRATION - The Deepavali celebration hosted by MAF and the Malaysian Embassy took place on Saturday, 25 October and was attended by about 150 people comprising of MAF members, their families and local friends. Malaysian students in Paris helped in with the preparation and served everyone Indian delicacies prepared by Krishni Restaurant. In keeping with Malaysian tradition, some MAF members also brought along various dishes from home to add to the festive ambience. Some MAF ladies - Indian and non-Indian - came in colourful Indian costumes, making the event truly Malaysian.

M'SIAN TEXTILE PROMOTION - The Malaysian Handicraft Development Corporation (PKKM) together with the Embassy organised a week-long event to introduce Malaysia's traditional textiles - batik, songket, tenunan - in Paris from December 1 to 5. About 100 guests including the French Prime Minister's wife, Madam Anne-Marie Raffarin (*see photo*) and notables of the French fashion industry, attended the fashion show at the Hotel Le Bristol on 3 December. The promotion of Malaysian textiles was also held separately at Rumah Malaysia, at a well-known French restaurant and at the UNESCO.



MAF ANNUAL DINNER 2003 - It was an elegant evening at the MAF Annual Dinner held at the Club Interalliée on 10 December. The dinner was attended by about 100 people comprising of MAF members, corporate members and "Friends of Malaysia".



HARI RAYA OPEN HOUSE - The Hari Raya Open House at Rumah Malaysia was hosted by H.E. Ambassador Tunku Datuk Nazihah on 29 November and received a big turnout of more than 300 people. Malaysian students from all parts of France also attended the function. Some of the Malaysian dishes served included mee kari, rendang, nasi kunyit and nasi himpit.





Kampong Echo

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MALAYSIA-FRANCE NEWS

Airbus Confirms Deal with PMB

Nov 20 - Airbus confirmed that it will sign an agreement with Syarikat Penerbangan Malaysia Bhd (PMB) on the sale of six A380 superjumbo aircraft, worth more than US\$ 1.6 bn before the end of 2003. The A380, valued at US\$ 270 m each and reputed as the world's biggest commercial jetliner, is scheduled to enter service by the first quarter of 2006. Airbus said that the company and PMB are at the "99% stage" in negotiating details of a contract. The company also said that all technical questions had been answered and key people such as finance, engineering, costing, government personnel and related specialists had reviewed and agreed with the terms and conditions of the contract.



In January this year, PMB signed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Airbus for the purchase of the six double-decked, four-aisle, 555-seater A380. Malaysia will be the tenth customer of the A380, with deliveries of the first three planes expected in 2007 and the rest a year later. PMB will then lease the aircraft to Malaysia Airlines. The national carrier is expected to use the planes to serve its long-haul European routes, including major hubs such as London and Amsterdam. (The Star)

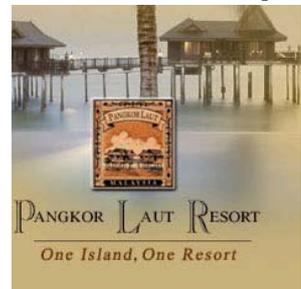
First Batch of 24 Graduates from Cisco

Oct 19 - A total of 24 graduates from the Malaysia France Institute (MFI) have become Malaysia's first batch of Cisco Networking Academy (CNA) to join the global fraternity of networking professionals, equipped to design, build and maintain computer networks. With this qualification, the new graduates will have a direct route to industry-standard certifications, including the Cisco Certified Networking Associate and Cisco Certified Network Professional. Both lead to the Cisco Certified Internetwork Expert, the industry's most respected qualification for network professionals. The CNA program, available in 152 countries, aims to address the shortage of skilled networking professionals in the industry and is a tool to bridge the digital divide for less developed countries. To date, there are 53 universities, polytechnics and community colleges throughout Malaysia offering the programme, including MFI. (The Star)



Pangkor Laut Resort Beats French Counterparts

Oct 31 - Malaysia's Pangkor Laut Resort has emerged overall winner in the respected up-market Conde Nast Traveller's 2003 Annual Reader's Travel Awards. The village spa resort pipped even more established spa resorts in France and Italy. The "Top 10" list includes The Daitai Langkawi, which was placed at No 8 but rated number two in the category of "Top Leisure Hotels Asia". Malaysia had a total of four mentions among the top 20 of the "Top Leisure Hotels in Asia". Apart from The Daitai, there were the Tanjong Jara Resort in Dungun (13th), the Ritz-Carlton Kuala Lumpur (17th) and the Mandarin Oriental Kuala Lumpur (18th). In the "Top Islands" worldwide category, Langkawi stood at 9th place, behind Maldives (1st) and Bali (2nd) but ahead of Phuket (13th).



In the "Top countries" category, Malaysia was rated 11th, behind Italy (1st), Australia (2nd), France (3rd), the United States (4th) and Thailand (5th). On the travel front, the Kuala Lumpur International Airport was rated number two after the Dubai International Airport, ahead of Vancouver (3rd), London's Heathrow (4th) and Amsterdam's Schipol (5th). The KLIA was also the best for two criteria - cleanliness and design/layout. Malaysia Airlines appeared in 8th place in the category of "Top International Long Haul Airlines", behind Virgin Atlantic (1st), Singapore Airlines (2nd) and British Airways (3rd). Malaysia Airlines was nevertheless rated top for two criteria - food and child friendliness. (Bernama)

EADS Picks Malaysia As Its Center In Southeast Asia

Nov 17 - The European Aeronautical Defense and Space (EADS) Socata, the second largest aerospace and defense company in the world, has picked Malaysia as its core service center for the maintenance of aircraft and helicopters in the South East Asia region. Eurocopter Malaysia, an EADS Socata subsidiary, is building a RM 5 m service center at Terminal 3 of the Subang Airport here which went operational in December. Its Managing Director, Philippe Lubrano, said the center would provide service, with local and foreign expertise, to customers from Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia. He said that the company wants to establish EADS Socata not only as the manufacturer but also one that provides comprehensive and reliable after-sales service to its customers in this region.



He also introduced the TBM 700, a high-speed business aircraft, which costs between RM 9.5 m and RM 10.2 m, and



Kampong Echo

*Persatuan Rakyat Malaysia di Perancis
Association des Malaisiens en France
Malaysian Association in France*

could accommodate up to seven passengers and powered by a 700-Hp turboprop engine. EADS expects to sell five to six TBM 700 aircraft in the region within three years. The service center in Subang would also have a design department to furnish the TBM 700 aircraft. (Bernama)

Naf Naf Opens at Suria KLCC

Oct 9 - In celebrating its 30th anniversary, French brand Naf Naf opened its flagship store at Sunway Pyramid, Petaling Jaya, on Oct 3. Naf Naf began in 1965 as Naftalin, the Italian term for naphthalene, the white chemical used to make candles or mothballs. Naftalin's founder, Gerard Pariente, did so well he roped in his brother Patrick. Naftalin was shortened and split into Naf Naf to signify the two siblings' partnership.

However, this is not Naf Naf's first foray onto Malaysian soil. There was a Naf Naf boutique in Lot 10 but it did not go the distance and folded in 1997. Naf Naf has now signed with Jerasia, which has experience in fashion retailing as it brought in MANGO or MNG, one of Malaysia's big success stories. Naf Naf has two target groups - those from 18 to 25 and working women from 25 to 40 who know how to stretch the ringgit. Naf Naf realizes that pricing is all important for the Malaysian market, and competition from labels like MNG, Kookai, Morgan and Zara. A tank top starts from RM20, up to RM700 for a jacket. Pants, skirts and blouses range from RM120 to RM180 and everything at Naf Naf is imported from France. (The Star)



L'Occitane Opens Store in KL

Oct 16 - The latest French personal care line in town, L'Occitane, opened its first store in KLCC in October. The brand was created by Olivier Baussan in 1976 when he created his own concoction of essential oil from harvesting wild rosemary and sold it at the local markets. The name L'Occitane means "the woman from Occitania" and it evokes memories of the land, the ancient province that once stretched across the south of France. Managing director of L'Occitane (Far East) Ltd, Hoffmann was in Kuala Lumpur to inaugurate Malaysia's first L'Occitane store which opened in Suria KLCC.

The brand uses traditional manufacturing methods with essential oils and natural ingredients, and will be distributed by Clarins in Malaysia. L'Occitane's strongest asset is its natural ingredients, sown from the richness of the land. On the latest store attraction in KL, Hoffmann said: "The decor will have touches of wood and terracotta. The fragrances and the warm colours give a welcoming ambience as though you are entering a home. Indeed, we hope to bring a bit of Provence to KLCC." (The Star)

L'OCCITANE
EN PROVENCE

Malaysian Film-maker Wins Nantes Award

Dec 6 - The story of an adopted Chinese girl in search of her natural mother won Malaysian independent film-maker, Ho Yuhang, the Special Jury Prize at the 25th Festival of Three Continents in Nantes. His film, Min, was up against nine other films from Argentina, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Japan and Pakistan. The top award, Gold Montgolfiere, went to Cuban director Joel Cano for his film, Siete Dias, Siete Noches (Seven Days, Seven Nights). Ho and another Malaysian film-maker and producer James Lee were invited to attend a workshop for film-makers. They also presented their upcoming film project, Summer Kisses, Winter Tears, at the festival. The festival was held in November and brought together rising film-makers from Asia, Latin America and Africa. (The Star)



CSS Wins Fox Raven Award in Cannes

Dec 8 - In a ceremony held in Cannes, Chocolate Sales & Suppliers Sdn Bhd (CSS) did Malaysia proud by winning the coveted Raven Fox Award for the Best Travel



Retailer Operating in a Single Country in Asia Pacific. This is the first time that a Malaysian company has had the honour of bagging the prestigious award. The award was for innovative promotions, creative display, marketing and presentation of chocolates at CSS duty-free outlets in airports. Since winning the award, many travel retailers from other countries have visited the company's duty-free outlets to learn the way CSS manages and display its products. The awards are organized annually by leading British-based Duty Free News International and Raven Fox Media in London. CSS operates the world's biggest duty-free airport shop called Choc Stop International at the KLIA, a 464 sq.m. outlet offering more than 1,000 varieties of chocolates. It also operates three shops at the arrival hall, domestic departure and main terminal building in KLIA. (The Star)

Socfin to Exit Malaysia

Nov 6 - SOCFIN Plantations, which put for sale its oil palm plantation land in Johor and Ulu Selangor, is believed to have drawn strong interest from plantation giants in Malaysia. Plantation groups such as IOI Corp Bhd, Kuala Lumpur Kepong Bhd and Keck Seng Bhd are believed to be among the strong contenders bidding for the Socfin estates. The estates to be sold are believed to be the last remaining estates of Socfin in Malaysia. The privately-held Socfin is controlled by foreign shareholders, namely France-based Compagnie Cambodge and Plantation Des-Terrace Rouges listed on the Luxembourg Stock Exchange. Socfin has been active in plantations operation since early 1900 and used to own huge landbanks throughout Malaysia, including Damansara Heights and Bangsar area at one time. (Business Times)



Kampong Echo

*Persatuan Rakyat Malaysia di Perancis
Association des Malaisiens en France
Malaysian Association in France*

Members write – Kampong Talk

LET'S LEARN PERIBAHASA

by Halida Nauleau

Seperti katak di bawah tempurung – Like a frog under a coconut shell

A person who never leaves his hometown – well, that does not concern any one of us here !



Ringan sama di jinjing, berat sama dipikul – carrying the light and the heavy together

The spirit of helping each other – such as the spirit of Malaysians in France

Seperti rusa masuk kampong – like a deer that enters a village



Someone who is not able to adapt to city life – only the metro and the RER bothers me !

Hangat-hangat tahi ayam – the heat of chicken excrement

Someone who does things halfheartedly

Seperti ayam dengan itik – like a chicken and a duck

Two people having communications problems

Air ditetak takkan putus – water cannot be cut with a knife

A family relationship can never be broken – At 60, I will opt for “Malaysia, My Second Home” program

Seperti kacang lupakan kulit – like a peanut that forgets its shell

An ungrateful person who forgets his origin – remember, the day when you crave for nasi lemak and sambal belacan !

Jauh di mata dekat di hati – absence makes the heart grow fonder

Someone who is far away from his loved ones, but keeps them close in his heart



ANGLOPHONE EN FRANCE

by Noreen Yek Boussetta

My first year in France didn't really go the way I wanted. Perhaps one of the reasons was because of my high expectations. I used to watch the "glamour" of Paris in the movies – the beautiful places, the rich culture and of course, "romantic Paris." But then, when I arrived in the "City of Love", I was a little disappointed. It was totally opposite to what I was expecting.



I found it hard to adjust to life in Paris; partly because of the language barrier. I didn't know a word in French – not even "thank you" or "sorry." It was very bad then.

I used to get stares from people whenever I opened my mouth to speak English. I felt intimidated to speak English. Due to the negative reactions from the French, I didn't dare speak the language. So, during social outings, I would just smile and nod my head, that people soon thought I was illiterate ! Jobless and incapable of speaking French, life was indeed rotten !

Sure, I had my husband but I couldn't cling to him 24 hours a day. However, things started to change after I started French lessons. Now, a year later things are indeed looking better for me. Not only can I speak and understand French better, but I feel proud that I can speak three languages confidently... effectively outdoing the French who generally speak only one language – French. And now, with a baby on the way, and a new house to boot, things are picking up.

And of course, there's MAF ! With its warm reception and kind members MAF has indeed made me feel at home in Paris.





Kampong Echo

*Persatuan Rakyat Malaysia di Perancis
Association des Malaisiens en France
Malaysian Association in France*

Ma belle France

I was walking down Champs-Élysées, down the beautifully lit avenue, lined with snowy-white Christmas trees, amidst all the hustle and bustle of last minute shoppers and tourists snapping away, thinking how lucky I am to be here; to be able to study, live, submerge myself in this richly-cultured country and almost feel like home. Thanks to JPA, I have been studying in France for 2 years now, with 5 more to go.

It is undoubtedly a privilege being sponsored to continue one's further studies abroad. Although studying in Malaysia is now encouraged, there is still a tiny spark in



most Malaysian students' hearts, hoping to be given the chance to be a student 'overseas'. Not many see France as one of the 'higher education studies' countries, unlike the USA or UK. But that is just what makes us French students special. We are the handful of students experiencing life in this developed, cultured and modern country. While some may not see it as good enough in educational standards, we

beg to differ. We are unique, privileged and honoured to be here.

Before coming to France, I underwent a 3-month intensive French language course conducted at UITM. Furthermore, our lessons were much more relaxed and fun compared to the US-bound students sweating away for their SATs or the UK- and Germany-bound students already on the A-level track. It was fun learning a new foreign language and showing off to other students.

The first 2 years in France consist of a preparation for the French education system. We learnt everything in French - Maths, Electronics, Chemistry, etc. It was funny how our brains would attempt to translate from French to English, because of the similar vocabulary, and then to Malay, since we all came from Malay-medium schools. There was a moment of brain adjustment, slowly beginning to listen, understand and think in French.

Being Malaysian, we believe ourselves to be rather tolerant people, open and respectful of other races, religions



and practices. But since living in France, I have learnt what being tolerant is really about. It is inhaling smoke in crowded spaces, getting used to dog excrement on the

sidewalk, pork being a staple meal in every restaurant and 'dead' Sundays where shops are closed. One must also be prepared to be shunned because of one's accented French. But besides all that, you learn to love the smell of French croissants from the nearby *boulangerie*, you stand in awe in front beautiful architecture and romantic castles, you long to run off to its charming countryside and you begin to understand why the French are so proud of their culture and nation.

Now, starting my 3rd year in France, life is getting tougher. I am now in an *Ecole D'Ingénieur*, which for the French is equivalent to prestige and hard work. The workload is abundant, the pressure is high and the challenges of being alone and away from home abound. No longer being among Malaysian students has its pros and cons. The path to really submerge in the French way of life is here. One has to speak French with the French to make friends, to borrow notes, to understand the lessons, and to live! On the other hand, no more 'makan' nights where we used to sit, eat and talk, reminisce about the way things are back home, feel, share and fill that void of loneliness with each other.

I have learnt so much since arriving here. I realized how weak I was and how strong I have become. Getting a scholarship to study overseas does not all mean that your future is well planned out for you. There were times I thought about quitting the program and running back home to where life seemed much simpler. But I would be missing out on the excitement in this beautiful country. I would miss listening to people rattle on in that romantic language, I would miss sitting in a lecture hall and having a rash of pride because I understand every word the professor says. I would miss the opportunity to share with Malaysians back home everything that I have learnt in and about France.

For now I'm going to seize the moment and get used to living amidst all this beauty.

Misha Lynn Nesaratnam



All contributions to "Kampong Talk" can be sent by e-mail to any of the editorial board members or via mail to MAF. The board reserves the right to edit for grammar and length without changing the original meaning.



Kampong Echo

*Persatuan Rakyat Malaysia di Perancis
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TRIBUTE TO TUN DR MAHATHIR

To a leader who made many changes to our lives, we will surely miss Tun Dr Mahathir. A charismatic leader who has taken Malaysia to great heights, he brought prosperity, modernity, and also international respect for Malaysia. Tun Dr Mahathir will ultimately be remembered for creating a nation. He has put Malaysia on the world map and gave Malaysians a genuine sense of pride in the country.

On the Malaysia-French relations, it reached its peak through the substantial efforts of Tun Dr Mahathir and President Jacques Chirac. Tun Dr Mahathir, who has a special place in his heart for France, has met President Jacques Chirac several times on different occasions over the years. In 2003 alone, after meeting the French President during a holiday in Paris, Tun Dr Mahathir was invited to the Enlarged Group of Eight (G8 Summit) in Evian. President Chirac also met up with Tun Dr Mahathir during his brief working visit to Malaysia in June this year.

For Malaysians living in France, there are two unforgettable events - in 1997, Dr Mahathir was the special guest of



President Chirac at the Bastille Day celebrations of 14 July in Paris. In November 2002, the Malaysian Association in France (MAF), had the honour and privilege to receive Tun Dr Mahathir accompanied by Tun Dr Siti Hasmah at Rumah Malaysia. MAF members had not only the opportunity to see Tun Dr Mahathir in person, but also to listen to his views on issues raised by MAF members.



After 22 years in office, Dr Mahathir waving good bye

WELCOME, PRIME MINISTER

MAF congratulates and welcomes Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister. Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi became the 5th Prime Minister



of Malaysia on 31st October 2003. Born on 26 November 1939 in Bayan Lepas, Pulau Pinang, Dato' Seri Abdullah received his tertiary education at the University of Malaya where he graduated in 1964.

Upon graduating, he joined the civil service as an Assistant Secretary in the Public Services Department in 1964. In 1969, he moved to the National Operation Council (NOC), a body responsible to exercise the ruling powers for the country after the May 1969 racial riots. Dato' Seri Abdullah was later promoted to the Ministry of Culture, Youth & Sports as Director General (1971-1973) and Deputy Secretary General in 1974. Dato' Seri Abdullah resigned from Government service in 1978 to pursue a political career. A loyal UMNO member since 1965, he was elected UMNO Supreme Council Member in 1981, and UMNO Vice President in 1984 and UMNO Deputy President in 1999.

Dato' Seri Abdullah won his first election for the Parliamentary seat of the Kepala Batas constituency in 1978, (a seat he has retained since). In the same year, Dato' Seri Abdullah was appointed to his first post in the administration of the Government of Malaysia, as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Federal Territory Ministry. He was then promoted to Deputy Minister in the same Ministry in 1980. Dato' Seri Abdullah later held the post of Minister in the Prime Minister's Department from 1981 to 1984; and Minister of Education from 1984 to 1986; Minister of Defence from 1986 to 1987; and Minister of Foreign Affairs from 1991 to January 1999. In January 1999, Dato' Seri Abdullah was appointed as the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Home Affairs.

Dato' Seri Abdullah is married to Datin Seri Endon. Dato' Mahmood. The couple is blessed with two children.



Dr Mahathir handing over his personal files, to mark the end of an era



Kampong Echo

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Association des Malaisiens en France
Malaysian Association in France*

SPORTS & LEISURE

The first MAF Scrabble competition for members was held on Wednesday, 15 October 2003 at UNESCO. The



objective of the competition was to foster good relations and sporting spirit among members.

Due to the fasting month of Ramadan, not many members turned up for the weekly sports meet. However, the activities were resumed as usual after the Hari Raya celebrations.

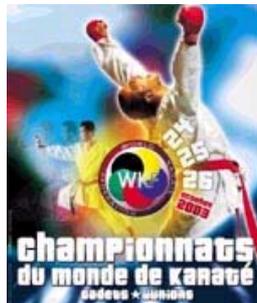
As of January 2004, all UNESCO passes for the gymnastic hall at the UNESCO will be magnetized. Members have to submit their old badges in exchange for the new ones.

For more information please contact Wan Hua at 01 45 68 34 76.

*Sports Committee contact: Mr Chai Chia Sin
Tel: 06 81 27 33 99*

World Junior Karate Championships

Oct 26 - The Malaysian Karate Federation (Makaf) sent nine exponents to the 3rd World Junior & Cadet Championships in Marseille, France from Oct 22-26. However, Malaysia



failed to win any medals. The cadet competition is for those aged below 18 while the junior level competitors are those between 18 and 21. Eight Malaysians took part in the junior competition while Parthiban Muthu competed in the 65 kg weight cadet category.

NEW MEMBERS

MAF would like to extend a warm welcome to new members:

- | | |
|---------------------|-------|
| 1. Mr Wong Kok Kong | Paris |
| 2. Mr. Noler Brahin | Lyon |
| 3. Mr Ho Zee Pei | Paris |

MALAYSIA AIRLINES SPECIAL FARES



The special fares given to MAF members are €730 for low season and €899 for peak season. Please note that you need a letter from the Embassy to certify your MAF membership. Contact Rogayah or Halida at 01 45 53 11 85 or the Malaysia Airlines reservation office at 01 44 51 64 20

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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|------------------------|-----------------|
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| Rathakrishnan Murugiah | Vice-president |
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| Melissa Shee-A.Gomes | Asst. Secretary |
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COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Tye Soon Kwai
- Ahmad Affendy Awalludin
- Tommy Lee Kok Seng
- Kuek Sok Kiew
- Chia Chai Sin
- Benjamin Pitot

All contributions to the newsletter and suggestions on MAF activities can be sent by e-mail to any of the editorial board members or via mail to MAF.