

PERPUSTAKAAN AWAM PASIR GUDANG

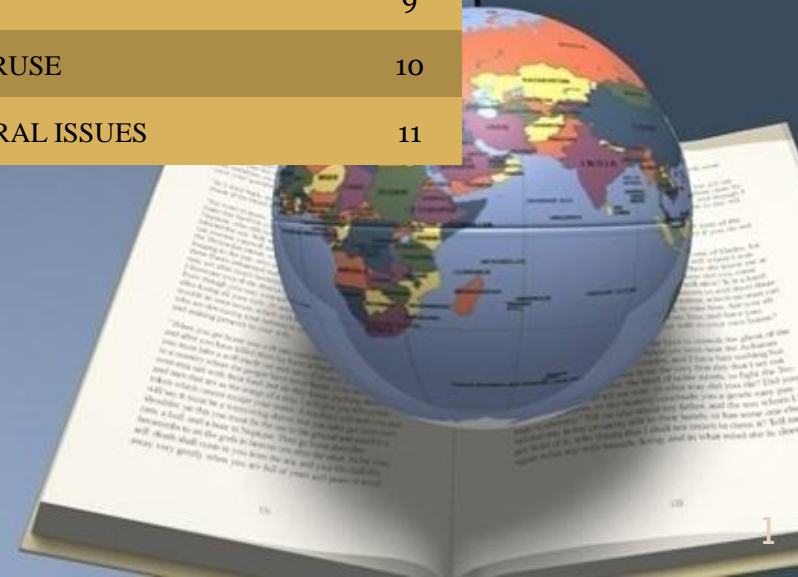
KERATAN AKHBAR BERKAITAN PASIR GUDANG

08 APRIL 2019

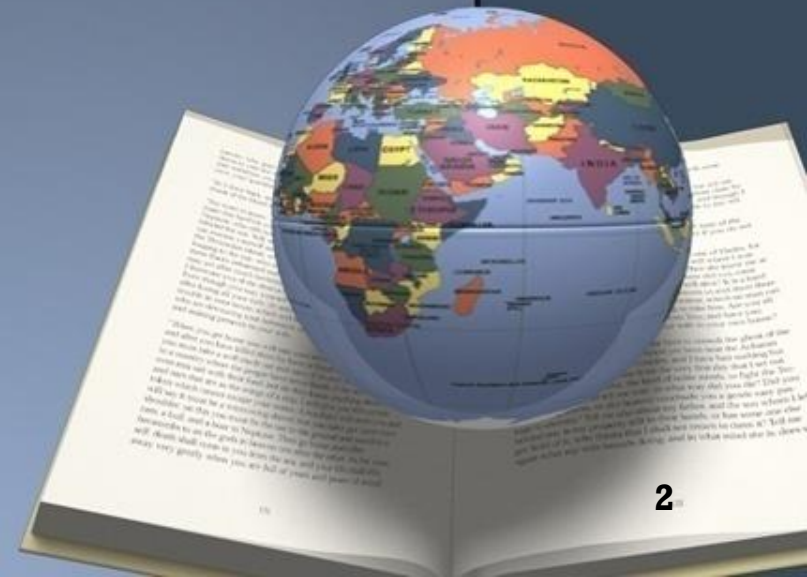
ISNIN



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HARIAN METRO



HARIAN METRO

Harian Metro @ 814/2



ISMAIL (tengah) menunjukkan dadah dirampas daripada seorang pengedar dadah, semalam.

Peket tali gantung

■ Pengedar sumbat 5.1 kilogram ekstasi dalam sampul surat

Izliailly Nurul Ain Hussein
izliailly@metro.com.my

Johor Bahru

Jika sebelum ini bungkusan teh Cina atau peket jus buah menjadi pilihan sindiket dadah namun terbaharu sampul bertulis *boarding pass* syarikat penerbangan lengkap butiran penerbangan di belakngnya menjadi pilihan pengedar dadah.

Sampul itu dikesan di-sumbat dengan serbuk ekstasi untuk mengaburi pihak berkuasa sebelum diserahkan pada pelanggan. Bagaimanapun, Polis Da-

erah Seri Alam menghidu taktik digunakan pengedar dadah itu selain merampas enam *boarding pass*.

Turut dirampas, 61 bungkusan serbuk ekstasi yang dipek ke dalam bungkusan pewangi.

Ketua Polis Daerah Seri Alam, Superintendan Ismail Dollah berkata, rampasan dadah dengan bungkusan baharu itu dibuat jam 8.50 malam, Rabu lalu, susulan penahanan suspek berusia 30 tahun di tepi Jalan Harmoni 3/9, Taman Desa Harmoni, di si-

ni. Menurutnya, pemeriksaan terhadap kereta suspek menemui beg kertas mengandungi 67 paket serbuk ekstasi seberat 5.117 gram (5.1 kilogram) dianggarkan bernilai RM13,400.

"Hasil siasatan awal, kami dapati dadah ini untuk dijual di pusat hiburan sekitar wilayah Iskandar dengan harga sepaket antara RM250 hingga RM300.

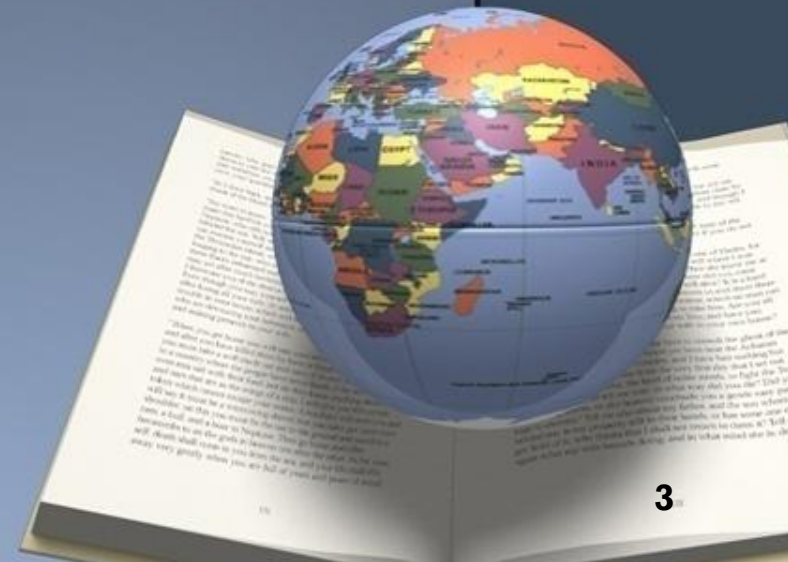
"Sepaket serbuk ini di-bancuh dengan air suam menghasilkan satu jag air

untuk kegunaan enam penagih. Semua dadah yang dirampas ini boleh menampung kegunaan 400 penagih," katanya pada sidang media di Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD) Seri Alam di sini, semalam.

Katanya, suspek yang dipercayai bergerak secara solo itu turut dikesan positif methamphetamine menerusi ujian saringan awal air kencing, namun tidak mempunyai rekod jenayah lampau.

"Suspek direman hingga Selasa ini bagi membantu siasatan mengikut Seksyen 39B Akta Dadah Berbahaya 1952 dan mengesan sekiranya ada individu lain terlibat dalam aktiviti ini," katanya.

FAKTA
Boarding pass syarikat penerbangan lengkap butiran penerbangan jadi pilihan pengedar



HARIAN METRO

Tak jejas industri pelancongan Johor

Johor Bahru: Pencemaran Sungai Kim Kim, Pasir Gudang di sini, yang mengemparkan negara bermula 7 Mac lalu, tidak menjejaskan kemasukan pelancong domestik dan antarabangsa ke negeri ini.

Pengerusi Jawatankuasa Pembangunan Wanita dan Pelancongan Johor, Liow Cai Tung berkata, walaupun insiden itu berlarutan selama kira-kira dua minggu, pihaknya tidak menerima sebarang aduan keengganan pelancong datang ke Johor.

"Johor masih selamat untuk dikunjungi. Kerajaan negeri tidak menerima sebarang laporan atau aduan yang berhubung kait dengan pelancong tidak mahu melancong ke negeri ini.

"Johor adalah sebuah ne-



LIOW

geri yang mempunyai tempat menarik dan tentu saja kemasukan pelancong domestik dan antarabangsa akan meningkat setiap tahun.

"Dengan pembabitan pelbagai pemain industri pelancongan, perangkaan kemasukan pelancongan mencatatkan peningkatan iaitu sebanyak 15.84 juta orang pada hujung tahun lalu iaitu peningkatan 8.82 peratus atau 1.4 juta orang berbanding hanya 14.44 juta kemasukan pelancong pada 2017," katanya.

Cai Tung berkata, kerajaan negeri menyasarkan kemasukan pelancong sehingga 16.6 juta orang tahun ini, selain mengharapkan kira-kira lapan juta pelancong menetap di Johor untuk sekurang-kurangnya satu malam.

Dengan adanya Tahun Melawat Johor 2020 dan Sukan Malaysia (SUKMA) 2020, diharapkan jumlah

kemasukan mencecah sekurang-kurangnya seramai 17.4 juta orang dengan 8.4 juta pelancong menghabiskan sekurang-kurangnya satu malam di sini.

Menurutnya, berikutan itu pihaknya menggalakkan pemain industri di setiap 10 daerah di Johor memainkan peranan lebih proaktif dalam menyumbang pembangunan pelancongan negeri selain mewujudkan peluang pekerjaan kepada komuniti setempat.

"Industri pelancongan Johor akan membangun dengan jayanya apabila ada kerjasama daripada semua pihak kerana ia bukan sahaja memberi gambaran positif kepada imej Johor, malah memberi manfaat kepada masyarakat," katanya.

Harian Metro @ 8/4/2019



UTUSAN MALAYSIA

UTUSAN MALAYSIA • ISNIN 08 APRIL 2019

Iktibar bencana Sungai Kim Kim



Pandangan IKIM

BENCANA pencemaran kimia di Sungai Kim Kim, Pasir Gudang, Johor baru-baru ini memberi cerminan jelas bahawa tahap kesedaran masyarakat di pelbagai peringkat masih lagi berada pada tahap yang sangat rendah dan membimbangkan.

Apabila bencana seumpama ini berlaku, pastinya sedikit sebanyak mencalakan imej dan mengundang persepsi negatif terhadap peranan badan-badan berkaitan pengurusan alam sekitar yang terlibat di negara ini. Antara persoalan yang pastinya timbul adalah membabitkan kelemahan dari sudut penguatkuasaan dan pemantauan badan-badan alam sekitar terlibat. Kejadian yang lepas usah dikenang, sebaliknya jadikan ia sebagai iktibar dan pedoman untuk kita memperbaiki segala kekurangan dan kelemahan di pihak masing-masing ke arah yang lebih baik.

Allah SWT berfirman yang bermaksud: *"Tidak ada kesusahan (atau bala bencana) yang menimpa (seseorang) melainkan dengan izin Allah SWT, dan sesiapa yang beriman kepada Allah SWT, nescaya Allah SWT akan memimpikan hatinya (untuk menerima apa yang telah berlaku itu dengan tenang dan sabar), dan (ingatlah), Allah Maha Mengetahui akan tiap-tiap sesuatu"* (Surah At-Taghaabun, ayat 11).

Walaupun insiden ini mendukacitakan seluruh rakyat Malaysia, namun sediak-tidaknya kejadian bencana yang berlaku ini menjadi *wake-up call* kepada semua pihak terlibat.

Rentetan daripada bencana Sungai Kim Kim juga telah membawa kepada pengumuman oleh Kementerian Tenaga, Sains, Teknologi, Alam Sekitar dan Perubahan Iklim untuk meminda Akta Kualiti Alam Sekeliling 1974.

Pengumuman pemindaan akta ini perlu disambut baik semua pihak, dengan harapan akta baharu yang bakal digubal dapat menjadi senjata ampuh untuk membela nasib alam sekitar.

Walaupun bagaimanapun, pengubalan akta baharu semata-mata bukan merupakan jaminan



SIKAP menjadikan sungai sebagai tempat pembuangan pelbagai sisa pencemaran, jelas menunjukkan betapa fakirnya tahap mentaliti sebahagian masyarakat kita. - UTUSAN/FARID JANUDIN

bagaimana insiden ini tidak berulang sekiranya tidak disusuli dengan aspek penguatkuasaan mamat.

Badan-badan berkaitan alam sekitar terlibat perlu memperkasa aspek penguatkuasaan di bawah bidang kuasa masing-masing bagi mencegah insiden ini berulang.

Jabatan alam sekitar umpamanya perlu bersiap sedia dengan tenaga kerja yang mencukupi bagi memastikan pemantauan secara berkala yang lebih kerap dapat dilakukan. Ini bukan untuk mengelak tragedi sama berulang, sebaliknya bagi memastikan jenayah alam sekitar lain dapat dibendung.

Selain itu, pegawai penguatkuasaan yang terlibat juga perlu dipastikan dapat bertindak lebih cekap dan pantas terhadap laporan-laporan berkaitan jenayah alam sekitar diterima, serta melakukan pemeriksaan susulan agar tindakan segera yang sewajarnya dapat diambil.

Manakala, di peringkat orang awam pula mereka perlu diberi pendedahan untuk berani bertindak membuat laporan kepada pihak berwajib sekiranya terdapat perubahan-perubahan yang mencurigakan terhadap alam sekitar yang berlaku di sekeliling mereka.

Keprihatinan daripada orang awam juga penting dalam memastikan maklumat tepat berkaitan jenayah alam sekitar dapat disalurkan dengan kadar segera kepada pihak berwajib untuk tindakan susulan.

Dari segi aspek pengurusan bencana pula, insiden pencemaran Sungai Kim Kim dilihat memberi isyarat jelas bahawa prosedur operasi standard (SOP) sedia ada perlu ditinjau semula dan ditambah baik. Ini kerana, SOP yang ada kini

hanya tertumpu kepada pengurusan bencana seperti banjir dan jerebu sahaja.

Ini bermakna, tanggungjawab besar perlu digalas oleh Agensi Pengurusan Bencana Negara (NADMA) untuk menambabbaik SOP sedia ada dengan menambah satu lagi tumpuan iaitu penyelarasan pengurusan bencana akibat pencemaran kimia. Penambabbaik SOP ini penting memandangkan negara kita masih belum ada SOP yang lengkap dalam menghadapi pencemaran kimia, biologi dan radiologi.

Malah, cadangan daripada pelbagai pihak agar NADMA menubuhkan satu majlis penasihat untuk menasihati kerajaan mengenai pengurusan kesan kimia, biologi dan radiologi juga dilihat sangat relevan, terutamanya bagi memastikan kerajaan lebih bersedia sekiranya insiden seumpama ini berulang.

Antara tujuan cadangan perubahan majlis penasihat ini adalah bagi menyediakan pelan tindakan pengurusan bencana yang lengkap meliputi beberapa aspek seperti: i) persampelan; ii) ujian makmal; iii) mengenalpasti bahan pencemar yang terlibat; iv) pembersihan dan pengurusan sisa bahan pencemar; v) pemantauan kualiti alam sekitar secara berkala dan berterusan; dan vi) rawatan dan pengawasan perubahan kepada mangsa yang terdedah kepada pencemaran.

Dengan terhasilnya pelan pengurusan bencana yang komprehensif dan mamat kelak, pastinya dapat mempersiapkan siagakan negara untuk lebih cekap dan terkelapadan dalam aspek pengurusan bencana pada masa hadapan.

PENULIS ialah Felo Pusat Kajian Sains dan Alam Sekitar, IKIM.



UTUSAN MALAYSIA

Sungai Kim Kim pusat perniagaan atas air pertama

Utusan Malaysia
@ 8/4/2019

PASIR GUDANG 7 April - Sungai Kim Kim di sini yang tercemar sebelum ini akibat pembuangan toksik haram bakal menjadi pusat perniagaan atas air pertama di negara ini.

Ahli Dewan Undangan Negeri (ADUN) Permas Jaya, Datuk Seri Che Zakaria Salleh berkata, sebelum pembangunan dilakukan, pihaknya akan membersihkan sungai sepanjang 1.5 kilometer itu selama tiga bulan.

"Kami sudah melantik kontraktor yang akan membersihkan Sungai Kim Kim selama tiga bulan, apabila bersih dan bebas pencemaran, kami akan bina gerai untuk orang ramai berniaga.

"Kami akan memberikan konsep baharu untuk merancak-

kan ekonomi dan pada masa sama, menjaga kebersihan sungai berkenaan supaya 'hidup' semula," katanya dalam sidang akhbar di Pusat Khidmat Masyarakat Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Permas di sini kelmarin.

Pencemaran sisa toksik di sungai itu pada 7 Mac lalu menjejaskan lebih 6,000 penduduk setempat termasuk pelajar sekolah hingga memaksa kerajaan menutup operasi 111 sekolah.

Mengulas lanjut, Che Zakaria berkata, cadangan yang dipersetujui oleh Menteri Besar, Datuk Osman Sapian dan Majlis

Perbandaran Pasir Gudang itu akan berjalan dalam masa terdekat.

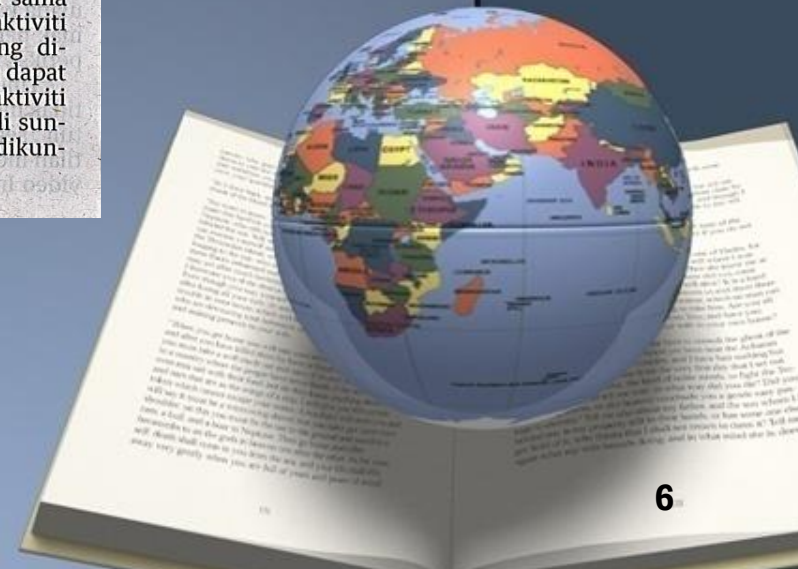
Menurut beliau lagi, perancangan tersebut bukan sahaja dapat membantu masyarakat setempat menjalankan perniagaan malah menjadikan Sungai Kim Kim sebagai tarikan pelancongan ke Johor.

Dalam masa sama katanya, aktiviti perniagaan yang dijalankan akan dapat

menghalang sebarang aktiviti pembuangan sisa toksik di sungai berkenaan berikutan dikunjungi ramai orang.



CHE ZAKARIA



SINAR HARIAN

ISNIN 8 APRIL 2019 • SINAR HARIAN

HUBUNGI SKUAD JOHOR, MELAKA & NEGERI SEMBILAN: MOHD FIRDAUS YON - 019-7906796, SARINAH MAT KASSIM - 019-6202383

Rampas serbuk ekstasi bernilai RM13,400

PASIR GUDANG - Taktik licik sindiket dadah yang membungkus serbuk ekstasi dalam paket pewangi aromaterapi gagal mengelirukan pihak berkuasa apabila dirampas polis, Rabu lalu.

Selain itu, serbuk ekstasi yang dirampas turut dibungkus dalam paket menyerupai 'boarding pass' sebuah syarikat penerbangan.

Ketua Polis Daerah Seri Alam, Superintendan Ismail Dollah berkata, serbuk ekstasi seberat 5.1 kilogram bernilai RM13,400 yang dirampas itu ditemui dalam sebuah beg di bonet kereta dinaiki seorang lelaki.

"Sekitar jam 8.50 malam, sepasukan anggota dari Jabatan Siasatan Jenayah Narkotik, Ibu Pejabat Polis Kontinjen (IPK) Johor dan Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD) Seri Alam menahan seorang lelaki di tepi jalan di Taman Desa Harmoni.

"Semasa pemeriksaan



Ismail menunjukkan serbuk ekstasi dalam pembungkusan menyerupai boarding pass.

kenderaan dinaiki suspek, kita berjaya membuat rampasan sejumlah dadah disyaki serbuk ekstasi selain menangkap lelaki berusia 30 tahun terbabit," katanya pada sidang media di IPD Seri Alam di sini, semalam.

Ismail berkata, kebiasaannya bungkusan dadah seumpama itu digunakan dan dijual di pusat-pusat

hiburan.

Menurutnya, saringan air kencing ke atas suspek mendapati lelaki terbabit positif dadah, namun tiada sebarang rekod jenayah lampau.

"Polis turut merampas wang tunai berjumlah RM400 dan lelaki terbabit direman bermula Khamis lalu sehingga hari ini," katanya.



SINAR HARIAN

18

SENTRAL

SINAR HARIAN 8/4/19

Menyamun polis samun warga asing

PASIR GUDANG - Dua individu ditahan selepas menyamun dengan menyamar sebagai anggota polis dalam kejadian di kawasan pentadbiran Ibu Pejabat Polis Daerah (IPD) Seri Alam, di sini, kelmarin.

Ketua Polis Daerah Seri Alam, Superintendan Ismail Dollah berkata, tangkapan ke atas dua suspek terdiri daripada lelaki dan wanita berusia lingkungan 30-an itu dibuat hasil maklumat dan risikan.

"Kita buat tangkapan ekoran daripada satu laporan polis dibuat seorang warga asing di kawasan Pasir Gudang di mana mangsa menyatakkan seorang perempuan dan seorang lelaki mengaku sebagai polis dan meminta pasport daripada mangsa.

"Mangsa gagal menunjukkan dokumen tersebut dan suspek mengarahkan mangsa naik motosikal dan dibawa ke satu taman permainan berhampiran. Di taman tersebut, mangsa telah disamun, diambil telefon bimbit-

nya, dipukul kemudian ditinggalkan di situ," katanya pada sidang media di IPD Seri Alam di sini, semalam.

Ismail berkata, susulan laporan polis yang dibuat pada jam 12.09 pagi itu, pihaknya berjaya menahan dua suspek terbabit sekitar jam 3.30 petang di dua lokasi berasingan selain merampas telefon bimbit yang diambil daripada mangsa selain motosikal digunakan.

"Kes ini disiasat di bawah Seksyen 395 Kanun Keseksaan kerana samun dan Seksyen 170 Kanun Keseksaan kerana menyamar sebagai penjawat awam," katanya.



Ismail (tengah) pada sidang media, semalam.



Johor MB still safe for now

Osman to meet PM today amid speculation that he will step down

By NELSON BENJAMIN, MARTIN CARVALHO and TARRENCE TAN
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

JOHOR BARU: The position of Johor Menteri Besar Datuk Osman Sapiaan looks safe for now after speculation swirled that he may have to step down.

It is understood that the Johor palace was dissatisfied with the way Osman handled the Sungai Kim Kim toxic gas contamination, which saw the closure of 111 schools in Pasir Gudang.

Speculation mounted that his career was in jeopardy when word got out that Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad was set to meet Osman at his office in Putrajaya today.

A check with aides at the Prime Minister's Office confirmed that such a meeting was scheduled for the evening.

The meeting comes ahead of Dr Mahathir having to receive his Singaporean counterpart Lee Hsien Loong at the Ninth Singapore-Malaysia Leaders' Retreat.

"Meeting is on. Talks - no idea," said a source when asked about the speculation of a reshuffle of both the menteri besar as well as the state exco line-up.

The retreat is also being attended by Lee's deputy and at least five other Singaporean ministers - the first since Pakatan Harapan came to power last year.

When contacted, Osman's press secretary Abdul Hakim Ab Rahman downplayed the meeting, calling it a "scheduled meeting".

"The Mentri Besar wanted to meet the Prime Minister to discuss matters on preparations for the retreat."

"There will be a pre-council meeting for the delegation and a dinner in conjunction with the retreat," he said, adding that early preparations for such meetings were the norm.

"Don't believe the rumours," Abdul Hakim added.

Should Osman have to go, among the contenders for the post are Johor Health, Environment and Agriculture Committee chairman Dr Sahrudin Jamal, who is from Bersatu, and State Youth, Sports and Culture Committee chairman Mohd Khuzzan Abu Bakar from PKR.

Osman, who is also state Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia and Pakatan Harapan chairman, is under pressure following a series of missteps since assuming the Mentri Besar post, the latest of which was the federal government's proposed Ship-to-Ship transfer hub project in Johor Baru earlier this month.

Following criticism that Putrajaya had bulldozed the project, Dr Mahathir said Osman was well aware of the planned development.

The Kempas assemblyman was also heavily criticised when he went to Batam at the height of the Sungai Kim Kim toxic gas

contamination crisis.

There has also been talk of a recent housing scandal involving the purchase of a property with huge discounts.

The meeting between Dr Mahathir and Osman will also take place amid the backlash following the Prime Minister's announcement on Friday that the Malaysian government had been forced to retract acceding to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

During the press conference on Friday, a visibly upset Dr Mahathir said the government "was forced" to withdraw following confusion created by those with political interests, calling it an attempt to undermine both the government and him as the Prime Minister.

He also alluded several times to the involvement of royalty in protests against the ratification.

Meanwhile, Johor PKR chairman Hassan Abdul Karim expressed support for Osman to remain as Mentri Besar, saying that there was no need for a reshuffle of the state exco for the time being.

"As the Johor PKR chairman, trust Osman. I'm quite vocal in criticising him openly, but he listens and is sincere in developing Johor."

"He works together with other component parties," he said, adding that there were regular state Pakatan council meetings chaired by Osman.

"So, we meet him regularly and

we have a platform to offer suggestions and politely criticise him in the closed door meetings."

"He accepts the criticism positively," said Hassan.

While he acknowledged Osman's shortcomings, Hassan said it was necessary for leaders in the state to give him time and space.

"We must also be fair to the Mentri Besar. We don't know whether some of the allegations are true or fake, so we are giving space to him to answer."

"Unless he commits a very serious legal, moral or political blunder, then it might be time to reshuffle," he said.

Asked about PKR taking over the Mentri Besar seat from Bersatu, Hassan, who has known Osman since their schooling days in Pontian, said all that would be decided at the national leadership.

Another state politician said Bersatu president Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin would be among those to help decide the names for the next menteri besar, pointing out that the candidate would likely be from the party as presently, it had 11 assemblymen while DAP 14, Amanah nine and PKR five.

"How can a party with only five assemblymen be given the menteri besar seat?" he said.

Hassan added that the next menteri besar would have to juggle between working with the federal government, the palace and the

2019



> **April 6:** At least 300,000 residents were affected by water disruptions in Johor

Baru when high levels of ammonia were detected in Sungai Sayong.

> **March 15:** Osman drew flak for going on a working trip to Batam when the Sungai Kim Kim toxic waste crisis was taking place.

> **Feb 14:** His biodata on a Johor government portal was changed after he admitted he did not complete his studies in Universiti Putra Malaysia following queries about his qualifications.

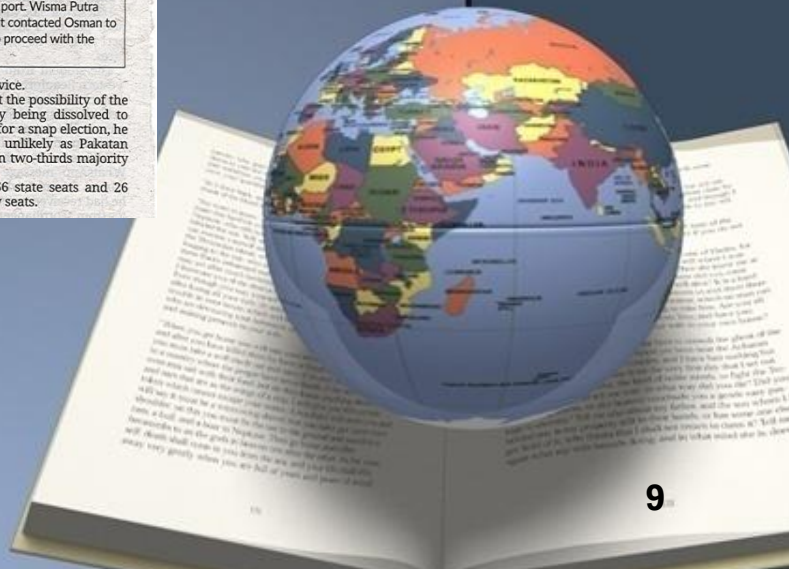
> **Jan 10:** A video clip went viral showing Osman being stopped from getting into a Proton Saga car with Johor Ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ibni Almarhum Sultan Iskandar and Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

> **Jan 9:** Relations with Singapore were strained when Osman went into disputed waters during a visit to Johor Baru port. Wisma Putra had said that it contacted Osman to tell him not to proceed with the visit.

Johor civil service.

Asked about the possibility of the state assembly being dissolved to pave the way for a snap election, he said this was unlikely as Pakatan had more than two-thirds majority with 39 seats.

Johor has 56 state seats and 26 parliamentary seats.



THE STAR

No free pass for latest drug trafficking ruse

PASIR GUDANG: Hiding drugs in plastic "boarding pass packets" seems to be the latest tactic by traffickers to avoid detection.

A police team from the Seri Alam Narcotics Crime Investigation Department (NCID) discovered the new modus operandi after seizing 5.1kg of powdered substance – believed to be ecstasy – worth RM13,400, packed in 67 plastic packets.

The seizure was made in Jalan Harmoni 3/9, Taman Desa Harmoni, last Wednesday at about 8.50pm, after the team noticed a man behaving suspiciously while driving a Proton Waja.

Seri Alam OCPD Supt Ismail Dollah said the team found the plastic packets in the car's bonnet.

A boarding pass design along with the emblem of a budget airline was printed on six of the plastic packets, he said.

"At first glance, it looked like a real travelling ticket packet but we found out there was no such merchandise produced by the airline," he said at a press conference at the Seri Alam police district headquarters (IPD) here yesterday.

He added that the 30-year-old suspect tested for methamphetamine but had no criminal record.

"Investigations are still ongoing to find out if there are others involved in this case," he said.

He added that the suspect would be on remand until tomorrow.

He said the drugs seized were enough to supply to 400 addicts.



Foiled: Supt Ismail (centre) showing the seized drugs at the Seri Alam police district headquarters in Johor Baru.

Police believe the drugs were to be sold at entertainment centres in Johor Baru and Seri Alam.

The case falls under the Dangerous Drugs Act 1952.

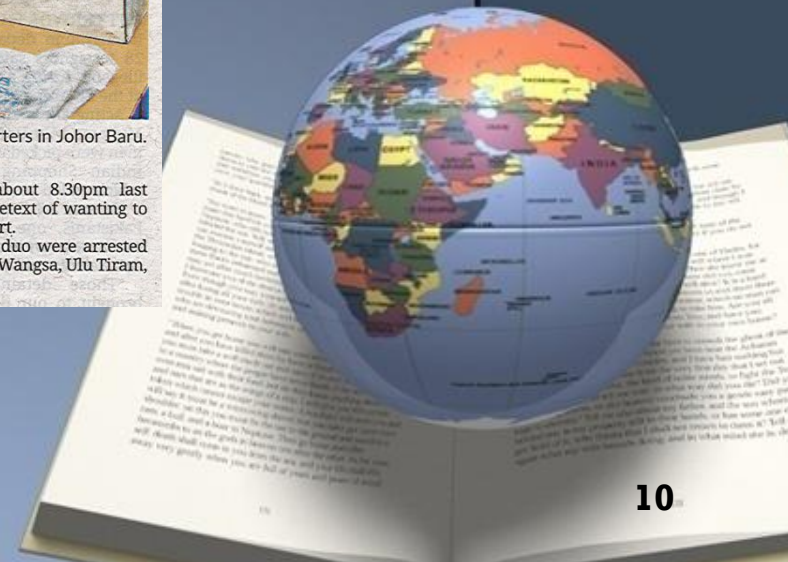
In a separate case, Supt Ismail

said a man and a woman in their 30s were arrested for allegedly beating a 24-year-old Bangladeshi man and stealing his phone while posing as police officers.

He said the suspects approached

the victim at about 8.30pm last Friday on the pretext of wanting to check his passport.

He added the duo were arrested in Taman Puteri Wangsa, Ulu Tiram, the next day.



THE STAR

Dr M and Hsien Loong to meet over bilateral issues

The Star
8/4/19

SINGAPORE: It is obvious that both Malaysia and Singapore are keeping their channels of communication open in their efforts to solve bilateral issues, although tensions escalated at times due to "exchange" of words.

Through numerous meetings, two bilateral issues were successfully resolved.

One is the postponement of the Kuala Lumpur-Singapore High-Speed Rail. The other is on the air-space over Pasir Gudang.

Malaysia and Singapore are currently intensively working on solving several other outstanding mat-

ters, such as the maritime border issue and the 1962 Water Agreement.

Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong is scheduled to be in Malaysia for two days from April 8 to meet his Malaysian counterpart Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad at the 9th Singapore-Malaysia Leaders' Retreat.

The latest edition of the Retreat, which was supposed to be held in November last year, was postponed.

Dr Mahathir had on Friday said Malaysia and Singapore would hold discussions in a "friendly manner" on all unresolved issues during the

Retreat.

He and Lee will meet for the first time over the Leaders' Retreat platform, a vital mechanism to strengthen relations and find solutions for bilateral issues.

"It is good to continue with this tradition. Our leaders must come together from time to time to have a good heart-to-heart talk," said Ong Keng Yong, executive deputy chairman of the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies at Nanyang Technological University.

Ong, through his experience, said the leaders were always able to use the opportunity to talk "directly and

candidly over bilateral issues".

"This particular process has been adopted over the past several years. Both sides see value in this," said Ong, who was High Commissioner of Singapore to Malaysia from 2011 to 2014.

Ong also hoped that both countries could find solutions to manage the bilateral tiffs based on Asean's "camaraderie spirit" while minding the positive image of the 52-year-old regional pact.

"When we have bilateral issues, let us find a way to resolve them. If we cannot resolve them quickly, we find a way to manage them," he said.

Meanwhile, Singapore CIMB Private Bank economist Song Seng Wun said: "The fact that there is going to be a face-to-face meeting between both leaders is already an encouraging sign after the annual Leaders' Retreat was postponed last November."

On whether bilateral issues could be resolved as "exchange" of words had taken place, Song noted that at the end of the day, "the resolutions will depend on how the two sides interpret legal documents or take further steps on whether to seek third-party arbitration." — Bernama

