

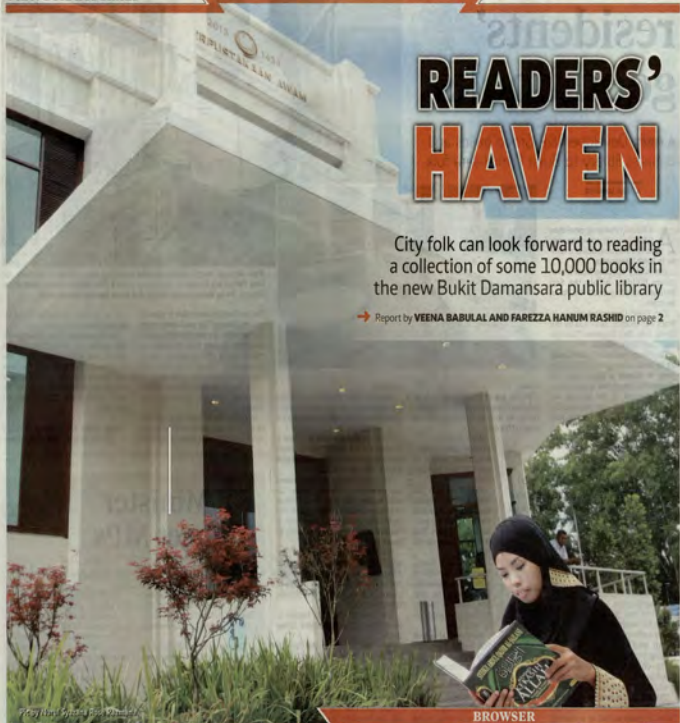
# STREETS CENTRAL

NEW STRAITS TIMES

## READERS' HAVEN

City folk can look forward to reading a collection of some 10,000 books in the new Bukit Damansara public library

→ Report by VEENA BABULAL AND FAREZZA HANUM RASHID on page 2



BROWSER

MY NEIGHBOURHOOD:  
SELANGOR

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## STREETS YOUR NEWS

# I&P in residents' good books

**A FIRST:** Developer I&P Group builds and donates library to Bukit Damansara folk

KUALA LUMPUR  
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**A** LIBRARY housing more than 6,500 books is now open next to the National Science Centre in Bukit Damansara.

The library operates from a two-storey building within the Seri Berlingin development on Jalan Berlingin.

The Bukit Damansara public library was recently launched by I&P Group Sdn Bhd chairman Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid.

The library was built by I&P Group on its land, making it the first company to donate a library with an elegant building to the community. Also present at the launch was director-general of the National Library Malaysia Datuk Raslin Abu Bakar.

Fully managed by the National Library, the library opened its doors to the community in March, attracting over 11,000 visitors to date.

Built on a 17,000 sq ft land (about 1,580 sq m), the 36,000 sq ft library, in an aesthetic post-modern building, cost RM6.2 million.

The disabled-friendly facility is equipped with computers, free Wi-Fi, a screening room and e-book access.

It also has prayer rooms for Muslims and a canteen as well as an underground parking facility.

The children's area consists of board games and educational videos in addition to books for toddlers.

There is also a multimedia room where visitors can watch movies and listen to music as well as a meeting room with a projector.

Outside the multimedia room are a number of computers for visitors



**Tun Ahmad Sarji Abdul Hamid** browsing through the collections. He lent 768 of his books to the library. (Inset) The children's section of the library. Pic by Kamal Izat Rahin and Nurul Syazana Rose Razman

to use. Books available are from general reading categories, religion, local interest, as well as reference and restricted books.

Also available are various newspapers, magazines as well as journals and publications.

Sarji said that his objective was to make the library the perfect one in which the public could always find the right book at the right time.

"I hope that this library will be able to promote a reading culture among the people, and of Bukit Damansara specifically," said Sarji.

Sarji had also lent 768 books from his own collection to the library to be used for reference purposes.

His books are placed in the Tun Ahmad Sarji Collection section on the first floor of the building.

Sarji added that according to the latest statistics, Malaysians now read 12 books a year on average, compared with two books a year

in 1995.

Resident Ravi Marikandu said that the company which built the space on prime land set a good example for corporate Malaysia.

"They could have sold or leased it as a house but they chose to build something at their own cost and give it back to the community.

"Such generosity is rarely heard of, especially in recent times," he said, adding that their contribution of books would also bring life to the institution of libraries and help it become a community hive, like libraries in the West.

Bukit Damansara Residents' Association chairman Tan Sri Aniz Abdul Rahman said the neighbourhood had a large community of senior citizens who would benefit from the library.

The 79-year-old also hopes to learn how to use computers in the library.

"We are thankful to I&P for initiating and sponsoring the library," he said, adding that the equally large population of youngsters and children would also learn more about the uses of the library.

Aniz said that the libraries were also neglected by the young due to distance and congestion.

"It is not just electronic books that are causing our libraries to decay but

can be revived. Instead of being labelled dying institutions.

The 71-year-old from Bukit Kiara, who sends his grandchildren to a school and a kindergarten in the neighbourhood, said that the area was strategic as it had big school communities with the likes of SK Bukit Damansara and Sekolah Seri Kempaka.

Stephen Cheah said that it would be good for the children to hang out there so that the tradition of libraries

can be revived. Instead of being labelled dying institutions.

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Page 1 pic: The library in Jalan Berlingin cost RM6.2 million.

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Ravi Marikandu, Bukit Damansara resident

## FT Minister to meet MPs

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor is scheduled to meet members of parliament following City Hall's plans to review its assessment fees.

The meeting is scheduled for Thursday at City Hall's headquarters.

Residents have been voicing their dissatisfaction over the revised rates that would take effect on Jan 1 next year after receiving notices from City Hall.

The new rates would require property owners to pay more

than 200 per cent of the current rate.

City Hall, in its defence, said the amount stated in the notice of revision of the valuation list sent to some 500,000 residential and commercial property owners in the city was just a proposed estimated annual value.

Mayor Datuk Seri Ahmad Phares Talib said the new rates have not been decided and that the last revision was done in 1992.

City Hall urges ratepayers to call its toll free line at 1-800-230-833 during office hours, if they have any enquiries.

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