

Woman's bid to chase snatch thief ends in fatal crash

BACHOK: A woman who tried to nail a snatch thief ended up dead after she lost control of her motorcycle and smashed into an electricity pole.

Siti Rohani Wahab, 45, was on her way to work from Kampung Telong to Kandis when the thief appeared from nowhere and snatched her handbag from her motorcycle's basket.

She went after the thief, but lost control of her bike and rammed into the pole at about 8.15am yesterday, said state Deputy Police Chief Senior Asst Comm Din Ahmad here yesterday.

SAC Din said Siti Rohani, an assistant cook at the Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, suffered head injuries and died on the spot after the 800m chase.

Nearby residents called for an ambulance, but she was already dead, he said.

In Johor Baru, a robbery suspect was injured after he jumped from a third floor hotel room in Iskandar Puteri here in an attempt to evade the police.

Johor Baru South OCPD Asst Comm Sulaiman Salleh said the 25-year-old man crashed through

the sliding glass door of the balcony before leaping off.

He said the man landed on the glass roof of the first floor and suffered minor injuries.

"He was brought to Sultanah Aminah Hospital after the incident on Monday night," he said in a statement yesterday.

Police detained the suspect after he was given medical treatment.

A 21-year-old woman was also detained as police believed they were part of a gang involved in house break-ins and robberies.

Initial investigations showed that both suspects had a criminal record relating to robberies, house break-ins and drug offences, he said.

ACP Sulaiman said the police are hunting for at least six more members of the gang.

Daily commuters avoid RRC



Tit for tat:

A reminder of the RM20 road charge on display at the Bangunan Sultan Iskandar Customs, Immigration and Quarantine complex in Johor. Singapore has imposed a reciprocal road charge.

Malaysians turn to public transport to refrain from paying the S'pore fee

JOHOR BARU: Many Malaysians who commute daily to Singapore are opting for public transport to avoid paying the island republic's reciprocal road charge (RRC).

They said the \$56.40 (RM20) per-entry charge, which went into effect yesterday and applies to all foreign-registered vehicles, was too much of a burden for them.

Cashier Nor Shahira Mohamad, 21, who usually drives in with her colleagues to work in Bugis, said they would be taking buses.

"Even after splitting the extra expense among the three of us, we still have to use almost 20% of our monthly salary to go in and out."

She planned to leave home two hours earlier when she takes the bus.

Design manager Felicia Ng, 30, who has been working in Singapore for the past nine years,

said a big chunk of her monthly income went to commuting costs.

"I have to fork out between RM3,800 and RM4,400, and about RM500 for toll charges on the Malaysian side," she said.

Arif Nasril, 27, a driver, said the RRC could lead to companies becoming less keen on engaging the services of his employer to have clients chauffeured into Singapore.

"Since Singapore imposed this charge, it should also come up with solutions to ease traffic congestion at the checkpoints," he added.

The RRC was announced last month by Singapore's Land Transport Authority.

It said the RRC mirrored Malaysia's road charge of RM20 per entry for non-Malaysian registered cars entering Johor, which was implemented on Nov 1 last year.



Help ease traffic: Arif inserting his autopass into its reader.

Court throws out defamation suit by developer

By QISHIN TARIQ

qishin.tariq@thestar.com.my

SHAH ALAM: The High Court here threw out a defamation suit by a real estate developer against a financial adviser, who claimed the company was a scam.

High Court judge Justice Azimah Omar ruled that Alfafa Development and Construction Sdn Bhd failed to prove any reasonable cause of action against the defendant Afyan Mat Rawi.

She struck out the suit and ordered Alfafa and its director Norsham Abd Aziz to pay Afyan RM10,000 in costs.

The suit had come about over a Facebook post that showed a conversation between Afyan and a person claiming to be a bank staff who had access to account information belonging to a company named Alfafa Bhd.

When approached after the case, Afyan said he was glad the court's decision was in his favour after a two-year legal tussle.

Lawyer Rahman Othman, who represented Norsham and Alfafa, said she had not received instruction on whether her client would appeal.

The Alfafa Group ran a variety of business, primarily selling bungalows for as low as RM99,000, as well as gold investment schemes, satay franchises and umrah packages.

Navy ship heads to Tioman to rescue tourists

KUANTAN: The Royal Malaysian Navy deployed the *KD Terenggamu* vessel to rescue 123 tourists stranded on Pulau Tioman after the passenger ferry service between the island and mainland was halted due to bad weather and rough seas.

The Maritime Region 1 (Mawilla 1) in Tanjung Gelang near here had deployed the navy vessel at midnight on Tuesday after the Pahang state secretariat called for help.

"The passenger ferry service was halted due to rough seas and bad weather," said a statement issued by Mawilla 1 yesterday.

It added that the ship was also taking food from the Rompin Social Welfare Department for the residents of Pulau Tioman. — Bernama

Cuepacs hits out at suggestion to trim civil service

KUALA LUMPUR: Cuepacs has slammed a suggestion that the Government consider retrenchments in the civil service.

Denying that the country's civil service was bloated, its president Datuk Azih Muda said it only appeared so due to the way that Malaysia classified government servants.

"We have looked through Article 132 of the Federal Constitution, in which all the services, including the armed forces, the police, teachers, healthcare and staff of local govern-

ment, are classified as the civil service.

"But when we look at developed countries, their civil servants do not include the police, the military, teachers and healthcare," Azih told reporters here yesterday.

For these countries, he said, the civil service was only made up of administrative and diplomatic staff.

"With this analysis, the actual number of civil servants (in Malaysia) is only about 500,000, not including those four service branches I mentioned," he said.

Cuepacs, said Azih, had asked the Prime Minister and the Government not to heed the proposal to reduce the number of civil servants in the country.

Calling for the matter to be closed, he said no party should try to use this opportunity to push its own agenda.

"This includes the efforts of certain parties to privatise Government services," he said.

The focus, he said, should be on increasing the productivity of the civil service.

"If before, we could do 10 things. Today, we must serve the people in 20 matters," he said.

On Monday, one of Malaysia's former top civil servants had called on the Government to consider reducing the number of civil servants.

Former Finance Ministry secretary-general and Economic Planning Unit director-general Tan Sri Mohd Sheriff Mohd Kassim had said that the country might be unable to sustain the current civil service workforce if it found itself in a financial crisis.