

THE STAR, THURSDAY 4 APRIL 2024 SOBA 2023

Shaping possibilities through grand achievements

The Star Outstanding Business Awards 2023 concludes in the celebration of its winners' resilience and success



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Recognising the year's best in business success

SOBA 2023 pays tribute to the best in Malaysian business in a night to be remembered

IN an occasion to mark a year of business successes, the Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) 2023 honoured 122 winners in this year's 14th Gala Night for their notable performance in the year.

These top businesses and leaders were feted at the Grand Ballroom of the One World Hotel, Petaling Jaya on Mar 7, which sought to honour this year's finalists for their resilience, perseverance and foresight.

Guests arrived dressed to the nines for the evening, which was officiated by Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development Minister Datuk Ewon Benedick.

The event was also graced by Star Media Group Bhd (SMG) chief executive officer Chan Seng Fatt, along with SOBA sponsors, CelcomDigi Berhad enterprise sales (SME) department head Steven Soon, Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad president/CEO Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd group CEO Datuk Seri Dr Michael Tio, RHB Bank Berhad SME banking head Yip How Nang and Malaysia External Trade **Development Corporation** (Matrade) strategic planning division senior director Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman.

"For 14 years, SOBA has recognised some of the most successful enterprises and built a community for the MSMEs to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship, nurture businesses to compete in the next level and encourage knowledge sharing among its alumni," said Benedick in his speech.

He mentioned that SOBA has recognised more than 400 entrepreneurs and businesses for their outstanding contributions to the economy, adding that entrepreneurs and MSMEs have always been the backbone of Malaysia's economy.

Chan remarked that the occasion represents a significant milestone as awardees were recognised for their contributions to the nation and the economy.

"Since independence, our forefathers had strived to build this nation through hard work and persistence," he said.

"This year also saw the introduction of a new SOBA category, the SOBA MIKRO Recognition Award, which aims to recognise MSMEs for their contributions to the nation's economy," he said in his speech.

He pointed out that SOBA, which has served as a platform



Another memorable year for SOBA 2023 gala night in One World Hotel as (from left) Star Media Group (SMG) Chief Content Officer Datin Paduka Esther Ng, RHB Bank Berhad Head of SME Banking Yip How Nang, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd Group Chief Executive Managing Director Datuk Seri Dr. Michael Tio, SMG Group CEO Chan Seng Fatt, Minister of Entrepreneur and Co-operatives Development Datuk Ewon Benedick, SMG Chief Business Officer Lydia Wang, Credit Guarantee Corporation (CGC) Malaysia Berhad Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak, CelcomDigi Berhad Steven Soon and Matrade strategic planning division senior director Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman commemorate the night with the South Korean sign of affection. — GLENN GUAN, FAIHAN GHANI, AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star



Benedick (left) warmly greeted by Chan (right) at his arrival at the One World Hotel for SOBA 2023 Gala Night.

for homegrown businesses and entrepreneurs, especially the MSMEs to strive for excellence, also inspires continuous improvement for businesses in order to expand their footprints on the international stage.

Words from the sponsors

SOBA sponsor Soon said,

"Sustainability is going to be an important topic and trend for Malaysian industries moving forward."

"It is also important for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to embrace sustainability to continue to foolproof their busipesses."

He said he believes SMEs will continue to embrace digitalisa-



VIPs at the main table all a-standing as the National Anthem was played before the start of the event.

tion and hopes to see artificial intelligence (AI), data analytics and future trends in technology incorporated in SOBA 2024.

In his congratulations, Mohd Zamree urged the winners to continue raising the bar that is to continue using technology to upskill the people and to improve the processes every He also highlighted that SMEs must understand the importance of ESG.

"Compliance with ESG also means increased cost of doing business. What we need to do is help them by providing incentives, such as to embrace green initiatives.

> TURN TO PAGE 4



CGC chief business officer Sean Tan, PKT Logistics Group chief operating officer Dr Seng Cheong Cheah, Raja Badrulnizam, Benedick and Chan sharing a quiet moment.



SOBA judge and Malaysia Entrepreneurs' Development Association (PUMM) president Datuk Teh Tai Yong (left) taking a selfie with Chan.



SOBA 2023 Gala Night event was also a great opportunity for like-minded individuals to mingle and network, while enjoying the fruits of their labours.

SOBA 2023 THE STAR, THURSDAY 4 APRIL 2024



Benedick: "SOBA has recognised some of the most successful enterprises and built a community for the MSMEs to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship, nurture businesses to compete in the next level and encourage knowledge sharing among its alumni." - FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

Triumphant victory

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"Bank Negara Malaysia has a scheme called Low Carbon Transition Facility to provide financial support at very competitive rates for SMEs that want to transition to green practices.

SMEs can borrow up to RM10mil and our company guarantees them," he said.

Tio also reminded award recipients to start embarking on their ESG journey, and to ensure their companies have a road map planned out to achieve net zero emissions by 2050.

"SOBA winners will always move to another level, whether by becoming a larger SME or public listed company.

"If they don't have an ESG road map, they won't be able to scale their business to another level or work with multinational corporations," he reasoned.

Yip said, "It's not about winning—it's about the knowledge that you have gained along the way and the relationships that you have built during the process."

However, he too wishes to see more emphasis on sustainability practices.

"In the coming years, I would hope that [SOBA] will place more priority on businesses that commit to deliver social responsibility and have good, strong, ethical governance.'

Raja Badrulnizam advised winners and participants to continue improving the business environment in which they operate, and to grab the opportunities available from around the world and to focus on

He noted that SOBA 2023 saw greater emphasis on sustainability, employees' welfare and product quality improvement, and hoped that this trend would continue in years to come.

"As the economy grows, companies have to be prepared for new challenges. But at the same time, they have to raise the bar to improve quality and standards and keep up with consumer trends.

Winners' glory

SOBA 2023 Malaysian Business of the Year award for RM25mil and above Woodpeckers Group Sdn Bhd director Tan Kai Young shared that the company plans to introduce more brands to Malaysia, besides popular Spanish yoghurt brand Llaollao.

He himself snagged the par excellence platinum award for Male Entrepreneur of the Year in the same tier.

"We are very happy to win the SOBA awards. It tells us that [after] operating [for] 10 years, we are doing what is right, that all our hard work is being appreciat-

Winner for the same Malaysian Business of the Year award but in the up to RM25mil tier, Juara Partners Sdn Bhd managing director Aniljit Singh Hari Singh attributed the success of the company to its teamwork.

"We will be working on an AI system in-house, we are moving towards that," he

Elite Entrepreneur of the Year award winner and founder of Peoplelogy Development Sdn Bhd Allen Lee said the company follows three principles: market sophistication, achieving the company's objectives and creating an amicable company culture.

Lee was also the par excellence winner for Male Entrepreneur of the Year in the up to RM25mil tier.

Par excellence award winner for Female of the Year award in the up to RM25mil tier G Daily Supply Sdn Bhd founder and managing director Elva Koh Hui Shan said that the company leverages on the distinctive competitive advantage to sustain and excel its enterprise market position.

Winner of the Young Entrepreneur of the Year par excellence award in the

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The event presented guests with many opportunities to dress up in their best and commemorate the moment with selfies. - GLENN **GUAN/The Star**

WINNERS RM25MIL AND ABOVE

MALAYSIAN BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

PLATINUM • WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD MALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT • TAN KAI YOUNG (WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD) OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT • DR CHIENG KING CHONG (PUBLIC MEDICARE GROUP SDN BHD)

CHUAH WAN PIN (INFOPRO SDN BHD)

MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT · DATUK JULIAN LAU JOO LIANG (TANJUNG RATNA SDN BHD)
FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT • TEH CHAI PENG (COMPLETE HUMAN NETWORK SDN BHD)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT • DATIN WIRA MOON SZE FUI (MK CURTAIN BERHAD)

· AZUIN BAHARUDIN (ACETEAM NETWORKS SDN BHD) YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT · NICOLE LIM XUI JHI (EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD)

PLATINUM · VIVID TELECOMMUNICATION SDN BHD GOLD · DRB-HICOM EZ DRIVE SDN BHD $\textbf{SILVER} \cdot \textbf{TBC} \; \textbf{ELEKTRIK} \; \textbf{SDN} \; \textbf{BHD} \; \; \textbf{MERITORIOUS} \cdot \textbf{KANIKA} \; (\textbf{MALAYSIA}) \; \textbf{SDN} \; \textbf{BHD}$

GRAND WINNER • IMAGINE AI SDN BHD

HONORARY MENTION · SUNWAY MEDICAL CENTRE PENANG SDN BHD

MERITORIOUS · NEWLEAF MANUFACTURING SDN BHD · LUNIX HEALTH SDN BHD **BEST IN MARKETING**

PLATINUM · WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD GOLD · EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD

SILVER · MK CURTAIN BERHAD MERITORIOUS · VIVID TELECOMMUNICATION SDN BHD

NAM HENG SAFETY GLASS SDN BHD

GOLD · PENSONIC SALES & SERVICE SDN BHD · WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD SILVER • MK CURTAIN BERHAD MERITORIOUS • VITAHEALTH MALAYSIA SDN BHD

 ${ t GOLD \cdot t EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD }$

BEST GREEN INITIATIVE

GOLD · BAN LEE HIN ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION SDN BHD

SILVER · PERBENA EMAS SDN BHD MERITORIOUS · MY US PIZZA SDN BHD

GOLD • INFOPRO SDN BHD • NAM HENG SAFETY GLASS SDN BHD $\,$ SILVER • AMP CORPORATION (M) SDN BHD $\,$ MERITORIOUS • SENG LI MARKETING SDN BHD • MY US PIZZA SDN BHD

PLATINUM · KPJ DAMANSARA SPECIALIST HOSPITAL GOLD · VIVID TELECOMMUNICATION SDN BHD

SILVER · EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD MERITORIOUS · MK CURTAIN BERHAD

• TETAP HANGAT RELIANCE SDN BHD

PLATINUM · NAM HENG SAFETY GLASS SDN BHD GOLD · INFOPRO SDN BHD

 ${f SILVER}\cdot{f KINGSMAN}$ REALTY SDN BHD ${f MERITORIOUS}\cdot{f THI}$ HARDWARE TRADING SDN BHD

POLICYSTREET

PLATINUM • EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD **GOLD** • SRI TERNAK MART (SK) SDN BHD

 $\textbf{SILVER} \cdot \textbf{CITY} \ \textbf{COIN} \ \textbf{LAUNDRY} \ \textbf{SDN} \ \textbf{BHD} \ \ \textbf{MERITORIOUS} \cdot \textbf{WOODPECKERS} \ \textbf{GROUP} \ \textbf{SDN} \ \textbf{BHD}$ • PUBLIC MEDICARE GROUP SDN BHD

BEST IN E-RETAIL

SILVER · SENG LI MARKETING SDN BHD

BEST IN HALAL PRODUCT/SERVICE

PLATINUM · EMPIRE SUSHI SDN BHD GOLD · WOODPECKERS GROUP SDN BHD

SILVER · KANIKA (MALAYSIA) SDN BHD

WINNERS UP TO RM25MIL MALAYSIAN BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

PLATINUM · JUARA PARTNERS SDN BHD
MALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR
PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT · ALLEN LEE (PEOPLELOGY DEVELOPMENT SDN BHD)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT · OOI BOON SHENG (WEB BYTES SDN BHD)

· KEONG CHUN CHIEH (OMINENT SDN BHD)

MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT · SELVAM A/L KANNIAH (MAXVUE VISION SDN BHD)

• WILSON LOW (WILSTECH SDN BHD)
FEMALE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT • ELVA KOH HUI SHAN (G DAILY SUPPLY SDN BHD)

OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT • SURIYATI DAMAN (HEGIRA SDN BHD)

• TAN NAI HUANG (WELLNESS CONCEPT (M) SDN BHD)

YOUNG ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PAR EXCELLENCE ACHIEVEMENT • ERIN HOO (THE UAV ACADEMY OF ASIA SDN BHD)
OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT • ALEX TAN CHUN PENG (TOP SCHOLAR EDUCATION GROUP SDN BHD)

• SHAWN LEE (X CONSULTANCY SDN BHD)

MERITORIOUS ACHIEVEMENT • DANNY YAP SENG PEOW (FAMOUS-ED SDN BHD)

PLATINUM · MOUNTNESS SDN BHD GOLD · DOREMI SERVICES & RENTAL SDN BHD

SILVER • EJEN2U INTERNATIONAL SDN BHD

MERITORIOUS · M PRO SOLUTIONS AUTO CARE SDN BHD ELITE ENTREPRENEUR OF THE YEAR

PLATINUM · ALLEN LEE (PEOPLELOGY DEVELOPMENT SDN BHD)

PLATINUM · MOUNTNESS SDN BHD GOLD · TAKA CAKE SUPPLIES SDN BHD

SILVER • FTGR BIKE SDN BHD MERITORIOUS • WILSTECH SDN BHD

PLATINUM • MAXVUE VISION SDN BHD GOLD • MOUNTNESS SDN BHD SILVER • CAMBRIDGE ENGLISH FOR LIFE SDN BHD MERITORIOUS • WILSTECH SDN BHD • M PRO SOLUTIONS AUTO CARE SDN BHD

PLATINUM · TAKA CAKE SUPPLIES SDN BHD GOLD · JUARA PARTNERS SDN BHD

SILVER · AERUMA GROUP SDN BHD · MAXVUE VISION SDN BHD

GOLD · OLIVE TREE CONCEPTS SDN BHD SILVER · ECO FOODSOFT (M) SDN BHD · RENTALWORKS SDN BHD MERITORIOUS · BEEBIESMART MARKETING (M) SDN BHD

PLATINUM · PEOPLELOGY DEVELOPMENT SDN BHD GOLD · NATURAL COSMOTECH SDN BHD

SILVER · BLANC DESIGNS SDN BHD · EJEN2U INTERNATIONAL SDN BHD MERITORIOUS • ECO FOODSOFT (M) SDN BHD • G DAILY SUPPLY SDN BHD

PLATINUM · JUARA PARTNERS SDN BHD GOLD · PLC TAX CONSULTANTS SDN BHD $\textbf{SILVER} \cdot \texttt{DOREMI SERVICES \& RENTAL SDN BHD} \ \ \textbf{MERITORIOUS} \cdot \texttt{ROSE ATTRACTIONS SDN BHD}$ **BEST USE OF TECHNOLOGY**

PLATINUM • DAGANGASIA NETWORK HOLDING SDN BHD **SILVER** • JUARA PARTNERS SDN BHD • DIRECT LENDING SDN BHD MERITORIOUS • WILSTECH SDN BHD • AERUMA GROUP SDN BHD

PLATINUM · M PRO SOLUTIONS AUTO CARE SDN BHD GOLD · TAKA CAKE SUPPLIES SDN BHD SILVER · PRESTIGE CARCARE GROUP SDN BHD MERITORIOUS · FTGR BIKE SDN BHD

GOLD · JACKALX SDN BHD

SILVER • MS. READ (M) SDN BHD • 123 LIVE MALL MALAYSIA SDN BHD

BEST IN HALAL PRODUCT/SERVICE

PLATINUM • TAKA CAKE SUPPLIES SDN BHD **GOLD** • G DAILY SUPPLY SDN BHD MERITORIOUS · DAGANGASIA NETWORK HOLDING SDN BHD

MIKRO RECOGNITION AWARDS

· MAMAYAYA ENTERPRISE · SRA GLOBAL RESOURCES · DEBAB BERAPI FOOD AND SERVICES • JZ DOLCE EMPIRE • LHEART DESIGN



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Leading the way in IT excellence

AceTeam Networks committed to delivering tangible results to customers

Acelean

NETWORKS

ACETEAM Networks Sdn Bhd stands at the forefront of technological innovation, spearheading advancements in cybersecurity and networking solutions that empower businesses.

With a commitment to excellence and a passion for pushing boundaries, it has emerged as a trusted partner in the ever-evolving landscape of digitalisation.

Established in 2012, AceTeam Networks Sdn Bhd is a prominent provider of cutting-edge networking solutions, led by its visionary executive chairman, Azuin Baharudin.

She recently won the Outstanding Achievement title for Female Entrepreneur of the Year award for RM25mil and above at the prestigious Star Outstanding Business Award (SOBA) 2023, a testament to her exceptional leadership and dedication as a woman in a male-dominated industry.

The vision at AceTeam Networks is to deliver the most effective and efficient IT solutions for its customers while striving to become a globally renowned IT company.

It envisions a future where its solutions empower businesses to thrive in the digital age.

The company is driven by a mission that guides its every endeavour.

It aims to be the preferred IT company, committed to delivering tangible results for its customers and partners alike.

Anchored by its core values of recognition, trust, relationship and commitment, AceTeam Networks forges lasting connections and exceeds expectations at

AceTeam Networks specialises in a comprehensive array of IT solutions tailored to meet the evolving needs of its clients. Its core offerings include:

> Cybersecurity, safeguarding businesses against digital threats with cutting-edge security solutions

> Unified communications, facilitating seamless communication and collaboration across diverse platforms



Azuin envisions a future where the IT industry not only thrives but also empowers the younger generation.

> Data centre and cloud solutions, empowering businesses with scalable and efficient cloud infrastructure

> Networking, building robust and reliable networks to support critical business operations

> Security operations centre, providing round-the-clock monitoring and response to mitigate cybersecurity risks.

Its commitment to excellence has not gone unnoticed. The company is proud to hold esteemed certifications such as ISO 27001 for Information Security Management System, underscoring its dedication to safeguarding client data.

Additionally, it has been honoured as one of the SME 100



Azuin (centre, seated) and the staff of AceTeam Networks gathered for the company's annual dinner, reflecting on a year of achievements and fostering strong bonds among colleagues.

fast-moving companies and are one of the first six companies to earn Malaysia Digital (MD) status from MDEC, proving the company's agility and growth trajectory.

As platinum partners of renowned brands such as HPE Aruba, Palo Alto, Poly and Silverpeak, Emerald partner of Infoblox, as well as authorised resellers of Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE), Fortinet, Nutanix, Cisco, Algosec, Zscaler, Dell, Zoom and many more, AceTeam Networks bring best-inclass solutions to its clients.

By partnering with industry leaders, the company ensures that its clients have access to the latest technologies and innovations, empowering them to stay ahead in an ever-changing landscape.

AceTeam Networks believes that success is not just about providing solutions – it is about fostering meaningful partnerships and empowering businesses to thrive in the digital era.

With its unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation, and customer satisfaction, the company is poised to lead the way towards a future where possibilities are limitless and connectivity knows no bounds.

For more information regarding IT solutions, visit www.aceteamnetworks.com

Recognising excellence in all categories

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RM25mil and above tier Empire Sushi chief executive officer Nicole Lim Xui Jhi said she aims to "localise sushi to Malaysian taste buds".

"We leverage technology-based analysis of customers behaviour and strategic branding position to further escalate our innovative business model, with a paradigm shift to 100 of its directly owned outlets nationwide."

UAV Academy Of Asia Sdn Bhd's director and accountable manager Erin Hoo, who won the par excellence award for the Young Entrepreneur of the Year for up to RM25mil tier advised that: "A clear focus on key deliverables and maintaining accountability, consistency and adaptability are essential for successful execution, but they must align with clear organisational objectives".

Rising Star grand platinum winner Imagine AI Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Edwin Loh Chi-Vin said that although it is a young company, it has managed to make quite a lot of traction in just a relatively short time.

"In the next few years, we would like to enable more SMEs and incorporations to adopt AI," he concluded.

Another winner of the Female Entrepreneur of the Year award, this time for RM25mil and above is Complete Human Network Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Teh Chai Peng.



Guests at the SOBA 2023 gala night were feted to an array of delectable dishes while awaiting the announcement of the winners. — GLENN GUAN/The Star



Winners of the MIKRO Recognition awards present their trophies, together with Ng (fourth from left). —AZHAR MAHFOF/The Star



Photo opportunities abound as guests, like the team from Kanika Malaysia Sdn Bhd does by striking a pose. — FAIHAN GHANI/The





STAR OUTSTANDING BUSINESS AWARDS

WE ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE

MALAYSIAN BUSINESS AWARD OF THE YEAR 2023

UP TO 25 MILLION

JUARA PARTNERS SDN. BHD.

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JUARA



B SOBA 2023



The introduction of these business plans is CelcomDigi's efforts to accelerate the digitalisation of more Malaysian businesses.

All-in-one business postpaid plan

CELCOMDIGI Berhad (CelcomDigi) unveiled a suite of its all-in-one Business Postpaid plans, tailored specifically to meet the dynamic needs of modern businesses on Feb 23.

Available now, the new range of business plans are super-charged with affordable options for digital solutions.

The introduction of digital solutions as part of CelcomDigi Business plans and is integral to CelcomDigi's continuous efforts to accelerate the digitalisation of more Malaysian businesses, helping them to save cost, increase productivity and prepare for growth in a digital economy.

Choices suitable for businesses, big or small

There are four CelcomDigi
Business plans that businesses
can choose from, all of which
come with uncapped 5G speed,
high data quotas and unlimited
calls allowing business owners to
have uninterrupted connectivity
and ample bandwidth to manage
their day-to-day operations.

Businesses that subscribe to the Business Postpaid 138 plan and above will also enjoy free data roaming. Depending on the plan chosen, businesses will have the option to include up to six supplementary lines, starting from RM48/month, which comes with uncapped high-speed 5G Internet and equal data quota as the principal line.

Businesses can choose from a wide range of digital solutions such as altHR, Mobile Security by Cisco Umbrella, Mobile Device Management (MDM) along with productivity tools such as Microsoft 365 or Google Workspace to complement any of the postpaid plans chosen.

altHR allows businesses to simply automate daily HR tasks such as leave, entitlements, claims and many more with a full-service HR super app.

This helps to increase the

Provides affordable access to digital solutions with uncapped high-speed Internet, equal data for all lines and free data roaming from RM80/month



Add on our affordable digital solutions



company's HR department's efficiency using cloud access, which offers real time, instant administration of employee management in any place at any time.

Mobile Security by Cisco Umbrella provides non-intrusive protection against cyber threats for all mobile products, promising ease in management of the app.

Businesses can expect a worry-free experience as hardware or software maintenance of the service is managed by the Cisco team. The suit will ensure malware is blocked without latency from all sides, ensuring system-wide protection so long as the broadband or fixed connection is still linked to CelcomDigi's network.

Businesses are also assured that with MDM, they have enterprise management of mobile devices for administration purposes, control and increased security. Sensitive data on devices will remain confidential and safe, while remote IT support will help save businesses money and time. Company-specific apps can also be updated remotely, which ensures business continues to run smoothly without any disruptions.

Focus on productivity

The plan also includes productivity tools such as Microsoft 365

for applications such as longtime, popularly used MS Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

These provide a convenient allin-one cloud-based application that includes cloud storage and document sharing via OneDrive.

It also enhances productivity and facilitates collaborations and remote-working.

While Google Workspace consists of tools and collaborative applications such as Gmail, Sheets, Doc, Slides and more.

These cloud-based real-time collaborative integrated communications tools offer scalability, security and compliance. It also features cross-platform accessibility and cost-effectiveness making it a versatile and efficient solution for businesses looking to enhance productivity and collaboration.

Trusted business partner

As Malaysia's largest mobile network operator with more than 20.6 million users on its network, CelcomDigi was established on Dec 1, 2022 from the merger of Celcom and Digi.

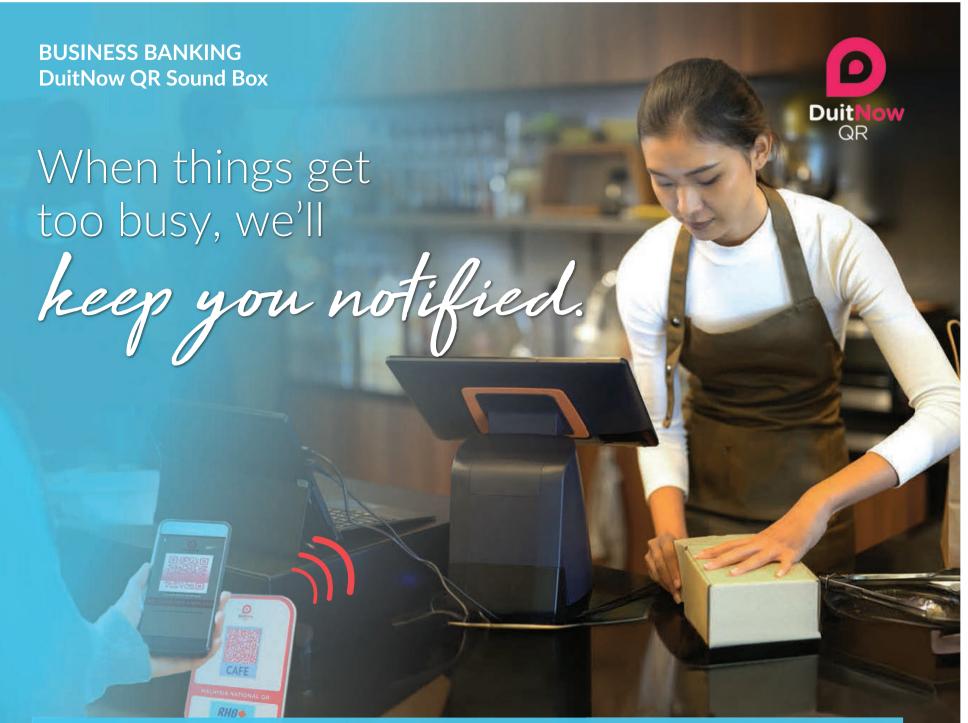
The company aims to serve the growing digital needs of its customers by leveraging its newly combined widest network footprint, distribution touchpoints, innovative range of digital products and services and superior customer experience, powered by passionate CDzens.

The company has clearly

The company has clearly defined ambitions to advance the nation, inspire Malaysian society, and be a leader in inclusion and ESG practices.



For more information on CelcomDigi Business Plans, scan the QR code.



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Programme Period:
1 December 2023 until 30 June 2024 or while stocks last*

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*Terms and Conditions apply.

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SOBA 2023 gala night was officiated by Ewon (centre in batik) and is seen here with the team from CGC led by Mohd Zamree (eighth from left) as well as Wang (sixth left), Chan (seventh left) and CGC chief business officer Sean Tan (at Ewon's left).



(From third left) Raja Badrulnizam, Ewon and Chan with



The PKT Logistics team with (from left) Chan, Ewon



The winners of the SOBA 2023 Malaysian Business of the Year awards Woodpeckers Group Sdn Bhd CEO Tan Kai Young for RM25mil and above tier (left) and Juara Partners Sdn Bhd managing director Aniljit Singh Hari Singh for up to RM25mil tier as Chan (middle) looks on.



Peoplelogy Development Sdn Bhd founder Allen Lee (left) won the Elite Entrepreneur of the Year title with Chan (right) who presented the award.



All smiles: (Front row, from left) Wang, Yip, Tio, Chan, Mohd Zamree, Raja Badrulnizam, Soon and Ng together with platinum, gold, silver, bronze and meritorious award winners at SOBA 2023 held at One World Hotel. — Photos by GLENN GUAN, FAIHAN GHANI, CHAN TAK KONG, AZHAR MAHFOF

Glittering array of stars in business

THE stars came out to shine at the grand ballroom of the One World Hotel, Petaling Jaya on March 7 for the 14th year of the Star Outstanding Business Awards.

Decked out to the nines, micro, small- and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) feted the night away as they and their peers won 122 awards that included the Malaysian Business of the Year and the Entrepreneur of the Year

Officiated by Entrepreneur and Cooperatives Development Minister Datuk Ewon Benedick, the event was also graced by CelcomDigi Berhad enterprise sales (SME) department head Steven Soon; Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad (CGC) president and chief executive officer (CEO) Datuk Mohd Zamree Mohd Ishak; PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd group CEO Datuk Seri Dr Michael Tio; RHB Bank Berhad SME banking head Yip How Nang; and

Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation

(Matrade) strategic planning division senior director Raja Badrulnizam Raja Kamalzaman. Representing Star Media Group

were group CEO Chan Seng Fatt, chief content officer Datin Paduka Esther Ng and chief business officer Lydia Wang.

In his speech, Datuk Ewon said the awards had recognised some of the most successful enterprises for the past 14 years.

He added that the awards had "built a community for the MSMEs to promote the spirit of entrepreneurship, nurture businesses to compete in the next level and encourage knowledge sharing among its alumni.

"SOBA has recognised more than 400 entrepreneurs and businesses for their outstanding contributions to the economy.'

"Entrepreneurs and MSMEs

SOBA 2023 Gala Night lit up by a galaxy of entrepreneurs

have always been the backbone of Malaysia's economy." The top winners of the awards went to Woodpeckers Group also

won the Malaysian Business of the Year award for RM25mil and While the Malaysian Business

of the Year award up to RM25mil went to Juara Partners Sdn Bhd. Peoplelogy Development Sdn

Bhd Allen Lee won the platinum title of the Elite Entrepreneur of The Entrepreneur of the Year

Award (Male) went to Woodpeckers Group CEO Tan Kai Young, Entrepreneur of the Year Award (Female) was won by Complete Human Network Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Teh Chai

The Entrepreneur of the Year Award (Young) was grabbed by Empire Sushi Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Nicole Lim Xui Jhi.

The Rising Star Award was won by Imagine AI Sdn Bhd, which took the platinum.

This year also saw the introduction of a new SOBA category, the SOBA MIKRO Recognition Award, which aims to recognise MSMEs for their contributions to the nation's economy.

SOBA 2023 is organised by Star Media Group with CelcomDigi Berhad, Credit Guarantee Corporation Malaysia Berhad, PKT Logistics Group Sdn Bhd and RHB Bank Berhad as main sponsors, and Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation as official trade promotion partner.

Supported by Bursa Malaysia, SOBA is audited by BDO while radio stations 988 and Suria are official media partners.

For more information, call SMG Events (017-231 1789) or go to www.soba.com.my



The team from CelcomDigi lending support to the event.



The RHB Bank team with Yip (second from left) turning out in full force for SOBA 2023.



SOBA 2023 sponsors with their plaques to honour their contribution in helping SMG make this awards year a



(From left) Aceteam Networks Sdn Bhd executive chairman Azuin Baharudin, Complete Human Network Sdn Bhd CEO Teh Chai Peng and MK Curtain Berhad director Datin Wira Moon Sze Fui (far right) were Female Entrepreneur of the Year awardees with Teh winning the par excellence title. Chan (third left) presented the awards.



Imagine AI CEO Edwin Loh Chi-Vin (middle) receiving the award for Rising Star from Ewon (right) with Chan (left) looking on.



Winners of the Male Entrepreneur of the Year in the RM25mil and above tier (from left) Tanjung Ratna Sdn Bhd Datuk Julian Lau Joo Liang, Tan of Woodpeckers Group , Public Medicare Group Sdn Bhd Dr Chieng King and Hegira Sdn Bhd CEO Suriyati Daman won the Chong, Infopro Sdn Bhd Chuah Wan Pin. Presenting the award is Chan



(From left) Wellness Concept (M) Sdn Bhd CEO Tan Nai Huang, G Daily Supply Sdn Bhd CEO Elva Koh Hui Shan Female of the Year for up to RM25mil tier. Koh took the par excellence title while Wang (third left) looks on.



Young Entrepreneur of the Year award winners (from second left) X Consultancy Sdn Bhd co-founder and managing director Shawn Lee, Top Scholar Education Group Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Alex Tan Chun Peng and The UAV Academy Of Asia Sdn Bhd Erin Hoo for up to RM25mil tier, with Empire Sushi's Lim for RM25mil and above as well as Rising Star winner Loh, as Chan (far left) and Ewon (far right) look on.



Winners of the first MIKRO Recognition Awards with Ng (fourth left) who presented the awards.



Winners of the Male Entrepreneur of the Year award in the up to RM25mil tier (from left) Wilstech Sdn Bhd CEO Wilson Low, Maxvue Vision Sdn Bhd CEO Selvam Kanniah, Lee, Wang, Web Bytes Sdn Bhd CEO Ooi Boon Sheng and Ominent Sdn Bhd CEO Keong Chun Chieh.

All for women empowerment

IN the dynamic realm of fashion and lifestyle, few narratives resonate as powerfully as that of Suri Daman and her brainchild, Hegira.

Recently honoured with the Outstanding Achievement award as the Female Entrepreneur of the Year at The Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) in the up to RM25mil tier, Suri's transition from corporate America to Malaysia's thriving modest fashion industry stands as a testament to her unwavering passion, entrepreneurial flair and dedication to empowering women.

Her journey began in Boston, Massachusetts, where she embarked on her corporate path after completing her studies in Biology and Economics.

Submerged in the fast-paced world of software and product development during the dot-com boom era, she honed her technological prowess and championed a human-centred design approach.

Balancing the diverse demands of global clients, she led a talented team of developers based in Bengaluru (previously, Bangalore), India, delivering innovative solutions that served prestigious educational institutions like Harvard University and the University of Arizona.

But her return to Malaysia after 13 transformative years abroad sparked her entrepreneurial zeal and laid the foundation for innovative ventures. Hegira's CEO seeks to inspire more women entrepreneurs



Suri receiving her Outstanding Achievement award for Female Entrepreneur of the Year in the up to RM25mil tier. — FAIHAN GHANI/ The Star

Recognising the untapped potential of the modest Muslimah fashion industry, Suri shifted her focus and co-founded several successful brands before launching Hegira, her most ambitious and impactful venture to date, a joint-venture with Siti Khadijah.

Inspired by Prophet Muhammad's historic Hijrah from Mecca to Medina, it encapsulates the essence of transition, transformation for the better and new beginnings.

Rooted in a deep-seated belief in the pivotal role of women in shaping households, communities, and nations, Hegira's mission extends beyond fashion.

By empowering women with products that simplify and enrich their daily lives, the brand aims to catalyse positive changes at every level of society.

Initially carving a niche in the hijab market, Hegira plans to evolve into a comprehensive lifestyle brand, offering a diverse range of products designed to simplify and elevate women's daily lives.

Committed to research and development, Suri and her dynamic team continually push the boundaries of innovation



Suri: 'Each venture has been a transformative learning experience, shaping my approach, refining my strategies, and fuelling my passion for innovation and growth.'

within the hijab category and beyond. Hegira's expanding retail footprint is a testament to its growing popularity and consumer appeal.

Since its modest inception in 2019, Hegira has grown exponentially, now boasting five vibrant retail stores across Malaysia including at the IOI City Mall, Sogo KL, Aeon Shah Alam, Aeon Kota Baru and Bandar Baru Uda Johor Baru.

Hegira aims to reach greater heights with plans to open five more stores by end 2024, offering immersive spaces to customers.

It has adeptly leveraged digital platforms, including popular marketplaces and its own e-com-



Hegira encapsulates the essence of transition, transformation for the better and new beginnings.

merce website, to reach a broader audience and capitalise on the digital transformation reshaping the retail landscape.

The brand's remarkable growth trajectory, marked by triple-digit growth year after year since its inception in 2018, underscores its strong market position and enduring consumer loyalty across Malaysia, Brunei, Singapore and the Philippines.

The brand exemplifies Suri's commitment to creating impactful opportunities and effecting positive change at a grassroots level with an all-local workforce comprising over 92% women that includes single mothers and the underserved communities, .

For more information, visit http://hegirahijab.com/

Over a decade of excellence and innovation

DagangHalal serves as platform for businesses to connect with Malaysian certification bodies

SINCE its inception in 2008, DagangHalal has evolved to become the world's largest B2B e-marketplace for halal-verified products

The company's mission has always been to facilitate online business between global trade buyers and suppliers, ensuring quality halal products and services are accessible worldwide.

With over 15 years of operation, it has not only expanded its platform but also embraced omni-channel platforms, making it easier for the global community to connect and conduct business.

Its dedication to leveraging technology and providing top-quality halal products and services was recently recognised at the SOBA Awards, where it has received a platinum award for Best Use of Technology and a bronze award for Best in Halal Product or Service in the up to RM25mil tier.

These accolades highlight its innovative approach to enhancing business operations and its unwavering commitment to the halal industry.

DagangHalal's collaboration with multinational companies and Malaysian midtier companies has broadened its product variety, allowing it to distribute through global distribution networks.

Its global halal portfolio partnership has enabled the appointment of country-level sole distributorships for selected halal products worldwide.

The company is currently working with halal product manufacturers in eight different countries and export halal-certified products under its house brand, as well as marketing and exporting Malaysian midtier companies' halal products to select countries, including Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Mongolia and Chile.



DagangHalal was part of the halal supermarket showcase at Anuga 2023 fair, highlighting the company's global buyer network, innovative products and global opportunity for aspiring suppliers.

Its partnership with Global Brand Synergy Sdn Bhd (GBS) further boosts its co-owned brands in worldwide international trade shows.

GBS, founded by Julie's and partners from 14 countries, acts as an intermediary between suppliers and manufacturers of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG).

This collaboration will introduce products like Let's Share Snacks, BlackMo Oatmilk Coffee & Tea, and C'mon Pop Corn to new markets, showcasing the quality and taste developed by industry experts with over 40 years of experience.

Understanding the importance of halal certification, DagangHalal serves as a platform for businesses seeking to connect

with certification bodies in Malaysia.

The nation's collaboration with coun-

tries like Indonesia and Saudi Arabia facilitates seamless market entry for certified halal products.

With the Malaysian authority's initiative, the certification process has been streamlined to 30 days, making it more efficient for businesses to meet market demands

However, it is important to note that DagangHalal does not directly provide certification services, but rather facilitates sales connections within the halal ecosystem

The global halal industry is witnessing rapid growth, with the halal food and

beverage market expected to grow substantially between 2020 and 2028.

The market is predicted to rise from US\$1.96 trillion in 2020 to US\$3.27 trillion by 2028, with a compound annual growth rate of 6.56% during the forecast period.

This growth is driven by factors such as the increasing Muslim population, which is expected to increase by about 35% in the next 20 years, rising from 1.6 billion in 2010 to 2.2 billion by 2030.

This represents more than 25% of the world population who are Muslims and a rising demand for certified halal products.

The halal industry is not confined to food and beverages but extends to finance, agriculture, education, consumer goods, cosmetics and more.

The industry is embracing technological innovations, particularly in logistics and supply chains, where blockchain technology is being used for more traceable supply chains.

DagangHalal's commitment to the global halal market is evident through its active participation in prestigious trade shows such as Anuga, SIAL Paris, Gulfood, Foodex Japan and more.

As the company looks forward to 2024, it is poised for transformative growth.

Its vision includes strategic market expansion, innovative product development, enhanced digital integration, and empowering MSMEs and entrepreneurs.

With the global halal market on the rise, it is committed to driving growth and innovation, ensuring that DagangHalal remains at the forefront of the halal industry.

To explore DagangHalal's offerings, visit https://www.daganghalal.com/



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Leading the fight against payment scams

RHB Bank DuitNow QR Sound Box presents secure, verifiable way to confirm DuitNow transfers

IN a move to create greater awareness of and combat financial fraud, the RHB Banking Group (RHB), in collaboration with Payments Network Malaysia (PayNet), launched its new RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box aimed at enhancing and strengthening payment security for consumers and merchants.

The RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box is an electronic scam prevention tool that supports static and dynamic QR codes, which seamlessly integrates into a merchant's point-of-sale

More secured transactions

The cutting-edge sound box provides a secure and verifiable method for both consumers and merchants to confirm the legitimacy of DuitNow transfers made via QR code.

Upon successfully receiving the DuitNow transfer, the sound box generates an auditory alert and a visual display, providing real-time reassurance that the intended merchant has received the correct payment amount.

The introduction of the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box addresses critical payment security issues, a concern that has grown significantly with the increasing reliance on cashless transactions.

Although QR codes add value to businesses by easing financial transactions, the bank acknowledges the security risks involved.

These include fake QR codes that deceive consumers into transferring their money to a scammer's bank account, or dishonest customers who use a fake payment receipt to trick merchants into believing that payment has been made.

Scam prevention

The sound box serves as an innovative scam prevention tool that benefits merchants and consumers as it simultaneously addresses concerns from both parties through a sound and visual alert.

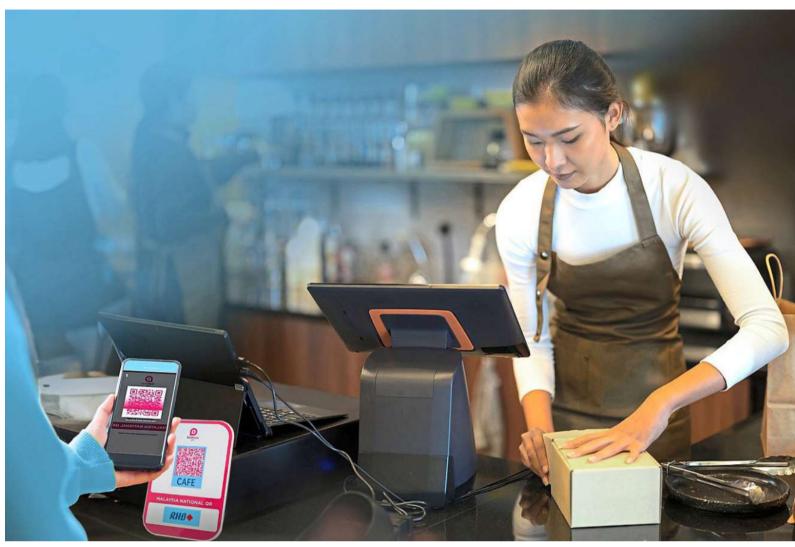
As the first bank to introduce the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box, this move reflects the on-going commitment to protecting merchants and consumers from fraudsters who exploit the convenience of cashless payments.

Progressive deploymentIn its initial phase, the group will deploy the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box to micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in sub-urban locations as part of its joint effort with PayNet to drive financial inclusion.

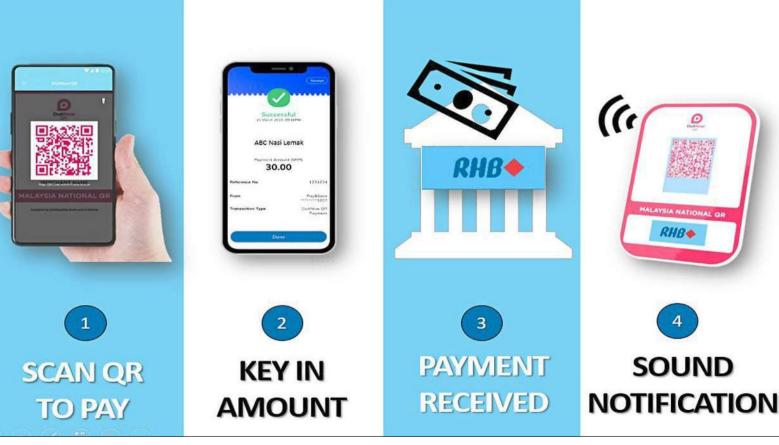
Subsequently, the group will roll out this solution to businesses with high financial transaction volume, including food and beverage outlets, grocery stores, night markets and various retailers.

The benefits of the sound box will allow more businesses in Malaysia to adopt cashless payments and ultimately pave the

way for greater digitalisation. As small businesses are more vulnerable to the impact of payment fraud, using the sound box



The cutting-edge sound box provides a secure and verifiable method for both consumers and merchants to confirm the legitimacy of DuitNow transfers made via QR code.



How the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box works.

will provide them with peace of mind regarding QR code transac-

This initiative supports PayNet's directive in building a more inclusive financial ecosystem, as well as RHB's aspiration of empowering small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and micro entrepreneurs.

Empowering MSME growth

PayNet chief commercial officer Gary Yeoh said, "Our partnership with RHB underscores PayNet's commitment in empowering MSME growth to thrive in Malaysia's digital economy.

"The RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box is a result of innovative technology adoption, which helps to

strengthen security in payment digitalisation and encourages businesses to go cashless.

"This initiative will enable businesses and users to enjoy the benefits of payment digitalisation without compromising security, reliability and ethical standards.

"This is consistent with Malaysia's Digital Economy Blueprint to create a digital environment that is trusted, secure and ethical."



For more on the RHB DuitNow QR Sound Box, scan the QR code.

Making AI solutions accessible to all

Imagine AI committed to empower the nation with machine learning



IMAGINE AI isn't your average tech company – it is leading the charge in automation, artificial intelligence (AI) vision and robotics, reshaping industries with its groundbreaking technology.

Since 2020, the company has been committed to making AI solutions affordable and accessible to everyone.

Today, its AI computer vision solutions are being used to automate quality control inspection in factories, grading and sorting of agricultural produce, as well as in digitisation and automation of business processes.

The company's flagship product, Imagine Vision+ is an AI computer vision software that allows both technical and non-technical users to develop solutions quickly and easily.

With a user-friendly interface that eliminates the need for prior programming language knowledge, Imagine Vision+ provides various tools and modules to assist in vision model development for general and industrial applications.

"Imagine AI does customised AI projects for our clients but we



From QC inspection to grading and sorting of agricultural produce and automating business processes, AI can be used by all companies.

also provide the tools for others to easily build their own AI solutions," said chief executive officer Edwin Loh.

"We hope that this will help to enable adoption of AI technology among all companies, large or small"

Some examples of innovative solutions that can be developed using Imagine AI's tools are: using AI Vision for maintenance inspection of buildings and infrastructure, data extraction of curricula vitae to automate the hiring process, AI robot teacher assistant, just to name a few.

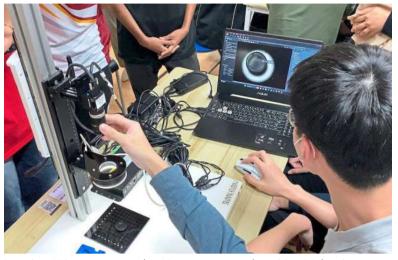
What makes Imagine AI special is its focus on making things easy.

Its software is designed to fit any business, big or small, and their machines are simple to use.

Business owners need not be tech experts to operate them as they are built for everyone.

As one of Malaysia's fastestgrowing AI companies, it is making waves, with big goals for the future.

Through strategic collaborations with leading organisations, schools and businesses, Imagine AI aims to grow the AI ecosystem



Imagine AI is set to grow the AI ecosystem and position Malaysia as a global AI centre.

in Malaysia and beyond.

It has set up a dedicated AI solutions development centre, bringing together schools and industries to co-develop AI projects.

"A very critical part of Imagine AI is knowledge sharing, AI upskilling and cultivating AI industry professionals, providing them with the skills and knowledge needed to take full advantage of the varied opportunities offered by AI," explained Loh.

"Malaysia can become a global AI centre where we have a workforce skilled in AI tools and applications, competent in taking on AI projects from all over the world."

Embark on this extraordinary journey as Imagine AI redefines the future of the industry with cutting-edge AI Vision solutions.

With Imagine AI by your side, the possibilities are limitless: Imagine The Future, Imagine AI For Everyone.

To learn more about Imagine Vision+ or for more information on AI solutions or upskilling needs, visit www.imagineaigroup. com



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Shining beacons of success

Members of the OE Mil family emerge as stars of the evening with 22 SOBA awards

ON the night of March 7, Malaysia's finest entrepreneurs were lauded in the Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) Gala 2023 event, as they were awarded for their tenacity in the face of past economic challenges.

Held at the New World Hotel grand ballroom, the evening was full of excitement, as businesses from across the spectrum vied for coveted accolades, celebrating the relentless spirit of innovation and resilience that fuels the Malaysian economy.

At the heart of this event, members of the OE Mil family emerged as stars of the evening.

In capturing 22 awards, they proved that their excellence and innovation were rewarded with every accolade received.

Their success was a display of what it meant to lead with vision and integrity.

At the centre was MK Curtain Berhad director Datin Wira Moon, who in the RM25mil and above tier, stood out as a beacon for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Her awards, which included Female Entrepreneur Of The Year, Best Brand and more – was a testament to her leadership as well as a show of how to drive positive change through busi-

The limelight also embraced



Nam Heng Safety Glass Sdn Bhd executive director Tan Yew Han and Seng Li Marketing Sdn Bhd chief operating officer Stephent Lee Aik Siang for their groundbreaking contributions to marketing, innovation and technology.

Their awards showed their commitment to excellence, setting the bar high for others in their fields.

In the up to RM25mil tier, Taka Cake Supplies Sdn Bhd managing director Leong Kia Chun and G Daily Supply Sdn Bhd (Samonyu) chief executive officer Elva Koh won the day for their awe-inspiring achievements.

From Best In CSR to Best Innovation, their achievements inspired everyone through dedication to excellence and innovation.

Similarly, Eco Foodsoft (M) Sdn Bhd founder Jason Teo and Top Scholar Education Group Sdn Bhd founder and CEO Alex Tan Chun Peng showed new paths with their innovative spirit and entrepreneurial zeal.

Their awards in Best Green



Winners in a row: (from fifth left) Alex Tan, Stephant Lee, Teo, (from 11th left) silver winner for Best Use Of Technology in RM25mil and above tier Kingsman Realty Sdn Bhd managing director Terrence Tan, Moon, Khiu, Leong, bronze winner in Best Use of Technology in RM25mil and above tier THI Hardware Trading Sdn Bhd director Lee Kok Lim, Koh (fifth from right) and Tan Yew Han (third right).

Initiative and Young Entrepreneur Of The Year respectively, were a nod to their brilliant, forward-thinking minds.

The OE Mil family also extended a heartfelt thanks to mentor, Datuk Wira (Dr) Calvin Khiu, who heads the OE EduGroup as

His mentorship had guided them through their journey towards success and displays the power of wisdom shared and "If you are a diamond, you will definitely shine," declared Khiu.

"The merriest congratulations to all the winners. For those who did not get an honourable mention, do not fret, keep on trying and let us shine together."

He added that he is proud to see entrepreneurs walk their talk.

The triumph of the OE Mil family and all the other winners in the grand ballroom is an affirmation of the vibrant entrepreneuri-

al spirit that defines Malaysia.

Their achievements stand as beacons of hope, urging every aspiring entrepreneur to dream bigger, push harder and dare to redefine the possible.

To all the winners and participants, a hearty congratulations.

And to SOBA, a deep appreciation for spotlighting the brilliance of Malaysian businesses.

Here's to a future that's even brighter, fuelled by innovation, growth and success.

Championing financial inclusion, social responsibility

JUARA

THE Star Outstanding Business Awards 2023 Gala Night proved to be a night full of celebrations for Juara Partners Sdn Bhd as it emerged as a standout, claiming the coveted Malaysian Business of the Year award in the up to RM25mil tier.

Adding to its triumph, the company also clinched three other category awards, which included:

- > platinum for Best Employer
- > gold for Best in CSR
- > silver for Best Use of Technology

Founded with a vision to revolutionise financing solutions, Juara Partners has emerged as a prominent player in the non-banking financial institution (NBFI) space.

By steadfastly incorporating ESG principles into its core values and decision-making processes, the company ensures it delivers value to the underserved and the underbanked communities.

"Winning this prestigious award highlights our dedication to pioneering innovative financing solutions tailored to our customers' needs," shared managing director Aniljit Singh.

"These solutions aim to enhance quality of life by promoting health, education, and entrepreneurship for sustainable income, representing a holistic step towards financial independence. Winning SOBA 2023 sets Juara Partners on greater ESG path



'Winning this prestigious award highlights our dedication to pioneering innovative financing solutions tailored to our customers' needs,' said Aniljit. — FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

"We will further leverage AI and machine learning to gain holistic insights while enhancing efficiencies across all facets of our business."

Recognitions and B Corp certification

In recent years, Juara Partners received numerous awards and certifications for its outstanding performance, including recognition in the realm of ESG.

In addition to receiving two Star ESG Positive Impact Awards in the small- and medium-sized enterprise to mid-tier category in 2022 and the McMillan Woods Global Awards 2023 for Digital Financial Transformation, Juara Partners also achieved the B Corp Certified status.

This certification underscores the company's commitment to social and environmental responsibility, transparency and accountability.

These recognitions come as a testament to its unwavering commitment to excellence, innovation and social responsibility

Sharing best practices through case study

Acknowledging its extensive

social commitment, Juara
Partners was chosen as one of
the SME business cases in a
research study commissioned by
the UN Global Compact Network
Malaysia and Brunei (UNGCMYB)
in collaboration with the KonradAdenauer-Stitiung (KAS) in
Malaysia.

The research was conducted by the Centre of Business Excellence, Faculty of Business and Economics and UMConsult, Universiti Malaya, in conjunction with UNGCMYB.

It aimed to develop business cases for ESG and its impact on business resilience.

Empowering employees and nurturing communities

As a responsible corporate citizen, Juara Partners upholds the dignity, diversity and well-being of its employees, customers, partners and communities.

It advocates fair labour practices, including competitive wages, benefits and conducive working conditions.

The company offers daily vegetarian home-cooked lunches to promote not only physical health but also camaraderie and job satisfaction among its team

Collaborating with the Anand Foundation, Juara Partners has been providing meals and drinks to the homeless and less fortunate twice a week, for many years

This steadfast commitment to serve demonstrates the company's unwavering dedication to making a positive impact beyond the workplace.

"We humbly acknowledge the awards and recognitions received and express gratitude to our stakeholders for their unwavering trust and support", said Aniljit.

Earning the SOBA 2023 Malaysian Business of The Year award, along with three other category awards, positions Juara Partners as a pioneering force in the financial services sector, epitomising excellence in both business practices and corporate citizenship.

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An overwhelming platinum victory

THE 14th Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) Gala Dinner, which was held on March 7 at the Grand Ballroom of One World Hotel, Petaling Jaya witnessed a victorious moment as PEOPLElogy Group founder Allen Lee clinched three platinum awards, reasserting his status as a pioneer in the Malaysian SME industry.

Lee's achievement includes platinum awards for Best Innovation, Male Entrepreneur of the Year (Par Excellence Achievement), and the prestigious title of Elite Entrepreneur of the Year 2023.

This outstanding recognition emphasises Lee's unswerving dedication to innovation, leadership and entrepreneurial excellence.

In response to his achievement, Lee shared his sentiments, stating, "Happiness is about achieving the dream of mine, to be recognised as one of the entrepreneurs that can make an impact in the Malaysia SME industry and also my industry."

His humility and passion for making a difference in the business domain are truly inspiring.

PEOPLElogy Group serves as a holistic training solution provider and is dedicated to impacting one million lives through its comprehensive training solutions.

It comprises four distinct divisions, which are discovery, development, digital and diversified, each housing its own set of brands.

The first division is discovery, which consists of the company's newly launched brand, "Soul", which specialises in helping clients discover the essence of their company by identifying existing gaps and leveraging world-ranked assessments to gain perception into organisational

PEOPLElogy founder sweeps three prestigious awards at 14th SOBA gala night



Lee (left) as he won the platinum award for Elite Entrepreneur of the Year, with Star Media Group CEO Chan Seng Fatt. -FAIHAN GHANI/The

Under the development division, there are three brands, "Skill", "Goal" and "The Future Talent".

These brands focus on bridging skill gaps and enriching talent development.

"GOAL" focuses on soft skills development, while "SKILL" provides comprehensive IT skills training.
"The Future Talent" addresses the digi-

tal talent shortage by offering training in UI/UX design, full-stack development and data science analytics.

The digital division is made up of "Skillsture", "Interactive" and "Peopleaps", dedicated to digital skill development and interactive learning experiences.

The website at www.skillsture.com

offers free subscription-based learning, and it focuses on the advanced skills your future need, while Interactive and Peopleaps facilitate learning through interactive video modules and app-based platforms.

The final division, diversified, incorporates the "Build a future team" initiative.

It collaborates with industry partners to construct a sustainable community by leveraging Industry Revolution 4.0 (IR4.0) through conferences, study tours and business connections, with the aim of positively impacting one million lives.

The reason behind Lee's selection for the three awards lies in his transformative leadership and the impactful services provided by PEOPLElogy Group.

Through innovation, dedication and persistence, Lee has demonstrated his ability to drive positive change and empower individuals and businesses to evolve in today's dynamic setting.

Looking forward, Lee remains devoted to his mission, expressing his vision to build the largest People Development Solution Corporation in South-East Asia.

With his entrepreneurial spirit soaring to greater heights, Lee encapsulates the essence of persistence, innovation and leadership, inspiring individuals, and businesses alike to be ambitious and thrive.

To learn more, visit https://peoplelogy.com/

Eyeing international expansion

MALAYSIA International Halal Showcase (Mihas) is poised for international expansion, acknowledging the importance and urgency of extending its influence beyond domestic borders.

This inaugural effort, called Mihas Middle East, will kick off with the event being held within the Middle East Organic and Natural Product Expo in Dubai from Nov 18-20, aiming to achieve total sales of

Malaysia External Trade Development Corporation (Matrade) chief executive officer Datuk Mohd Mustafa Abdul Aziz said the strategic initiative acknowledges the potential for growth and emphasises the importance of establishing Mihas as a globally renowned event.

"The internationalisation of Mihas is an initiative to take the brand to greater heights as well as to attract a diverse array of participants and buyers particularly from West Asian, South Asian, and African markets to the flagship event in Mitec, Kuala Lumpur.

"With an ambitious target of RM1bil in sales during the event, we demonstrate our commitment to significant revenue generation and market penetration. By establishing Mihas as a globally recognised event, we seek to position Malaysia as a leading player in the international

halal industry," he told Bernama. "By choosing Dubai, we aim to capitalise on its strategic location, vibrant business landscape and growing interest in halal products to maximise the impact as well as success of Mihas internationally," said Mohd Mustafa.

The CEO is confident that Matrade will achieve the one billion sales target.

"We aim to showcase a diverse range of Malaysian halal products and services with 150 to 200 participants from small, medium and large-scale companies that are export-ready at Mihas Middle East.



"Among sectors that would be promoted are food processing, pharmaceuticals, beauty and cosmetics as well as health products. We are also considering other sectors including services," he added.

The Middle East Organic and Natural Products Expo is the largest trade exhibition in the Middle East for organic and natural products and will take place at the Dubai World Trade Centre.

With regards to Malaysia's trade performance, Mohd Mustafa said that it is expected to recover in the year 2024 in tandem with the outlook by the World Trade Organization (WTO) which anticipated global trade to grow by 3.3%.

Malaysia's trade performance continued its positive trend in February 2024, growing by 3.3% to RM211.79bil year-on-year.

Exports valued at RM111.33bil while imports rose to RM100.46bil.

Trade registered growth for the second consecutive month this year and also delivered the highest monthly value for the month of February in Malaysia's trade

Trade surplus was valued at RM10.8bil, marking the 46th consecutive month of surplus since May 2020.

Mohd Mustafa reckoned that 2024 will also be a year of significant political changes, with major elections scheduled to take place in our key trading partners notably the US, South Korea and India, which could have a significant impact on trade and international relations.

Matrade has seen a handful of achievements in 2023 and among them is the 19th edition of Mihas, which was the largest ever organised resulting in total sales amounting to RM3.20bil.















Winning with sustainable efforts

Tan holding up the Best Malaysian Business of the Year award. — YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

WOODPECKERS Group is a company founded with a goal to transform the food and beverage (F&B) landscape through leading a shift in taste and consumer preferences in Malaysia and beyond.

With the belief that food brings people together regardless of race, gender and religion, the group aims to introduce different cultures through food and beverages as well as to provide delicious, quality food to everyone.

Woodpeckers Group prides itself for offering a variety of cultural food experience that its customers will always remember – from the renowned and nutritious Spanish natural frozen yogurt – llaollao, to its own casual fine-dining restaurant named TBC, to the best loved Thai Milk Tea brand ChaTraMue

Woodpeckers Group surges on with ESG agenda after SOBA 2023 success



One of the many popular offerings from Woodpeckers Group, the renowned and nutritious Spanish natural frozen yogurt llaollao.

and its own coconut shake specialty store, Shae.co.

Group chief executive officer, Tan Kai Young, who was awarded the Best Malaysian Business of the Year award in the RM25mil and above tier, said that the win was evidence of the team's hard work.

"We will continue to grow our brands in the F&B industry and continue to bring in new brands to Malaysia.

"ESG is something that we will focus on this year. Customers of our brands can return used plastic cups and tubs for us to recycle and we will give them a discount in return," said Tan.

Woodpeckers Group won a total of six major awards at the



TBC serves up contemporary European cuisine with international influences.

Star Outstanding Business Awards 2023, namely:

> Top-Of-The-Class Awards
(RM25mil & above turnover)

(RM25mil & above turnover) > Best Brand – Gold Winner

> Best Halal Product/Service – Gold Winner

> Best in Marketing – Platinum Winner

> Best in Retail – Bronze Winner

Outstanding Achievement Awards

> Male Entrepreneur of the Year – Platinum Winner

> The Best Malaysian Business of the Year – Platinum Winner' While Woodpeckers Group

strives to continue in providing the best cultural food experiences to Malaysian consumers, all



The best loved Thai milk tea brand ChaTraMue.

this is also with attention given to corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the support to grow Malaysia's sports community.

Woodpeckers Group started its CSR campaigns back in 2019 – where with only eight outlets, llaollao launched the Secawan Kasih, Sedekah Budi CSR programme, whereby customers donate RM3.50 to send a personalised llaollao cup to any of the orphanages.

During the campaign period, llaollao collected a whopping 978 handwritten cups.

The team decided to donate an additional 222 cups, totalling 1,200 cups sent to 12 orphanages.

In sports sponsorship, Woodpeckers Group is a key



The group's coconut shake specialty store, Shae.co, combines taste, wellness and vibrance.

sponsor of Malaysia's national Paralympic badminton gold medallist Cheah Liek Hou since 2021 and has continued to this day.

Cheah is the reigning seven-time World Paralympic Championship gold medalist.

This has provided both financial and emotional support to the nation's Paralympic badminton champion to continue striving for the best together with Woodpeckers Group on their respective platforms.

Always working towards higher achievements year-on-year, the group will continue to pursue higher goals by continuing to grow its brands in the F&B industry and also bring in new brands.

Thriving future in financial consulting and employee well-being

AS the recipient of the SOBA Award 2023 for Best Employer in the up to RM25mil tier, PLC Tax Consultant is honoured by the recognition from the panel of judges.

This accolade affirms its role as industry pioneers in financial consultancy and employee welfare, setting new standards for exceptional employment practices and financial coaching.

The company is driven by the belief that its strength lies in its people.

Its robust remuneration and welfare policies that surpass industry norms, include performance bonuses, educational support and enriching team-building retreats, fostering a culture of ownership and appreciation.

ownership and appreciation.
Its strategic pillars of attracting talent, talent growth and operational excellence have cultivated a thriving workplace, marked by low turnover rates and a strong reputation as a choice employer.

Cultivating a culture of empowerment and growth

The company is committed to nurturing its team beyond monetary rewards.

Through comprehensive learning and development, support for working parents and diverse insurance plans, it addresses the varied needs of its employees.

Its initiatives promote a harmonious work-life balance, creating a supportive community.

In talent management, the company focuses on sustainable, long-term development.

Its personalised career paths,



Luah (centre, holding plaque) and his team from PLC Tax Consultants after receiving the SOBA 2023 Best Employer award in the up to RM25mil tier.

bolstered by regular coaching and a balanced appraisal system, have significantly enhanced performance, client satisfaction and organisational productivity.

This approach to talent engagement underscores its dedication to employee advancement and operational success.

The company champions continuous learning, offering an array of internal and external

training tailored to the dynamic demands of its industry.

This commitment is evident in its substantial budget allocation for development programmes, ensuring every team member is equipped for personal and professional growth.

Fostering a supportive communication culture, its office design reflects its commitment to a positive work environment, encouraging creativity and collaboration. The open-door policy and regular team-building activities cultivate workplace harmony and ensure every voice is heard.

Excel in people's development with team coaching culture

As a comprehensive chartered accountant firm, PLC offers integrated consultation in assurance, tax advisory, corporate law, per-

formance management, ESG coaching and business valuation.

Its holistic approach extends beyond mere compliance, focusing on operational improvement, transparency and trust-building with stakeholders.

The SOBA award victory is a testament to its unwavering dedication to its team and its innovative business practices.

Its competitive remuneration, extensive welfare initiatives and emphasis on talent development and learning are designed to empower its employees and foster their growth.

As the company celebrates this achievement, it reaffirms its commitment to industry leadership and employee empowerment.

PLC extends its thanks to its mentors, coaches and its dedicated team, whose hard work has made this possible.

It anticipates continuing forward in innovation and sustainable growth.

Those interested are encouraged to join this exciting path in building a culture of happiness within its working environment.

PLC offers the difference where the belief of a happy team creates a sustainable thriving community and clients.

For more information on its services and HRDC claimable trainings, contact chief human resource officer Patrick Luah at 011-2768 2862 or email to patrick@plctax.com
Those interested in joining the team, write to career@plctax.com.

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COMPLETE Human Network Sdn Bhd (CHN), under the leadership of founder and chief executive officer Teh Chai Peng, continues to lead Malaysia's enterprise mobility industry.

Recognised as a platinum winner in the Female Entrepreneur of the Year category at the 2023 Star Outstanding Business Awards (SOBA) in the RM25mil and above tier, CHN has solidified its position as a trailblazer in the sector.

With over a decade of experience and a client portfolio spanning hundreds of large corporations, SMEs and education institutions, both locally and globally, CHN has achieved an impressive annual revenue growth rate exceeding 40% since 2018.

Leveraging its innovative enterprise mobility as a service (EMaaS) and device-as-a-service (DaaS) service offerings, CHN stands as one of the fastest-growing enterprise mobility companies in Malaysia and the region.

"I am truly honoured to receive this award, as it underscores our unwavering commitment to transforming the professional services industry through digital innovation," says Teh.

"We will continue to push forward, develop better services, and broaden our reach to more countries across Asia and beyond."

In today's dynamic business landscape, agility and efficiency are imperative for sustainable growth. In fact, enterprises globally are seeking innovative solutions to streamline operations and empower their workforce.

This is where CHN, as a pioneer in EMaaS and DaaS solu-

Elevating enterprise mobility

CHN stands as Asia-Pacific's premier service and solution provider for businesses



Under the leadership of Teh (left), CHN has solidified its position as a trailblazer in the sector – seen here receiving her award from Star Media Group chief executive officer Chan Seng Fatt. – FAIHAN GHANI/The Star

tions across the Asia-Pacific region, plays its role.

With a steadfast commitment to revolutionising mobility infrastructure management, the company proudly uses its latest suite of cutting-edge, tailored end-toend solutions to simplify mobility management, enhance productivity, and help organisations navigate the complexities of device management, application integration, and data security.

At the core of its offerings lies its EMaaS platform – a comprehensive solution empowering organisations to efficiently manage mobile devices, applications, and data.

Through its technology expertise and knowledge of industry best practices, CHN enables businesses to optimise mobility infrastructure while ensuring robust security, regulatory compliance, and cost-effectiveness.

Moreover, as an authorised reseller of leading brands such as Apple, Dell, HP, Lenovo, Acer and Asus, the company provides a diverse mix of DaaS, offering unparalleled flexibility and

choice to businesses across all industries, namely in financial institutions, aviation, oil and gas, retail, fast moving consumer goods, government, education and the SME sector.

CHN's DaaS model provides businesses with a scalable approach to device procurement and management, where organisations can access the latest devices and technology without the burden of ownership, benefiting from streamlined deployment, maintenance, and support services. Another hallmark is its unwavering dedication to customer satisfaction. With a seasoned team committed to delivering personalised support and guidance, CHN ensures that each client receives bespoke solutions tailored to their unique business requirements.

Recently, the company has forged strategic partnerships to expand its services, becoming an exclusive partner of the global enterprise mobility alliance (GEMA) and collaborating with COPE Private Equity to enhance the ESG ecosystem.

These partnerships further strengthen CHN's position in providing adaptable IT mobility solutions to businesses.

"We hope that our latest suite of EMaaS and DaaS solutions will continue helping businesses across the Asia-Pacific region," added Teh.

"We recognise the challenges faced by organisations in managing their mobility infrastructure, and we are committed to delivering innovative solutions that empower our clients to thrive in today's digital landscape."

For details about Complete Human Network and its suite of EMaaS and DaaS solutions, visit completehumannetwork.com or email sales@completehumannetwork.com





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