

A lush green forest path with a wooden boardwalk leading into the distance. The path is made of wooden planks and is surrounded by dense green foliage and trees. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The overall scene is peaceful and natural.

Living On TheHILL

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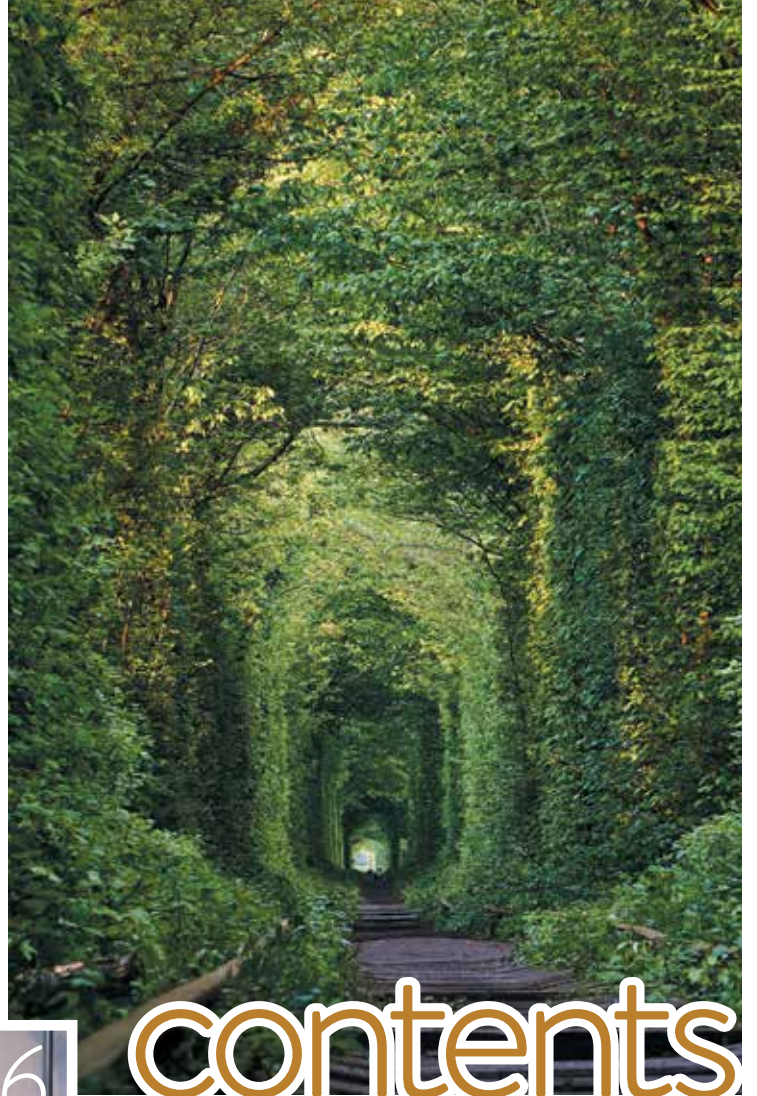
YB Hannah Yeoh
joins first BTRA
Gotong Royong

Voting in GE14:
a Millennial
Perspective

Taman Tunku
Makeover



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The President Speaks

Your BTRA Committee has been working diligently behind the scenes in the past few months, collaborating with DBKL and its agencies to resolve some pressing matters related to our neighbourhoods.

One highlight was our first ever meeting with the MP of our constituency, newly elected in GE14, YB Hannah Yeoh. The installation of a new government and MP presented a fresh opportunity to engage directly with a highly proactive government representative who, we hope, would be able to assist in municipal governance matters for mutual benefit.

BTRA was invited to nominate representatives as members of the Majlis Perwakilan Penduduk Wilayah Persekutuan Sub Zon 2, which covers Bukit Damansara, Medan Damansara, Taman Duta and Bukit Tunku. We shall have six representatives on this Committee. We believe that it brings us closer to our neighbours as well as the authorities, and can only be good for BTRA.

Another worthwhile endeavour was our collaboration with DBKL on its Blueprint Kebersihan, and putting in place resources and plans to elevate Bukit Tunku, Taman Duta, and BTRA itself, to prime position among other residents' associations and neighbourhoods in KL.

The outcome of these many discussions was a Gotong Royong on Saturday 6th October. A fuller article on this activity is in the following pages. I must say that, after a bit of anxiety about attendance, the event was a great success. We are firmly on the radar of YB Hannah's office and DBKL. Thanks to the BTRA Committee for organising and coordinating the event, and to all of you for supporting the event through your active participation.

It was especially encouraging that several new members who participated in the Gotong Royong offered to participate in BTRA's sub-committees. We welcomed them immediately!

Additionally, there has been action taken with regard to the many abandoned and derelict properties in our midst. These eyesores are a public health hazard, but as private properties, there are limits to what we can do to get owners to do the right thing. The Environment Sub-Committee, comprising Mr Tan Beng Kheong, Ms Jaspreet Kaur Gill and Dato' JJ Choong, has been very involved with DBKL on this front. Hopefully, DBKL's latest round of notices on the properties will motivate owners to maintain their lots.

Turning to the membership of BTRA, there are currently 167 members, of which 22 are Associate Members. We could do a lot better, so I strongly encourage residents to join BTRA and strengthen our collective voice with DBKL and other government agencies — as well as help to introduce new resources, such as a network of CCTV cameras to improve neighbourhood security, which will benefit everyone. It would be great if members recruit non-members to join BTRA — neighbours, family members, for example. Annual membership fees are RM200 for Ordinary Members, and RM50 for Associate Members. Signing up is easy. There is a membership form in every issue of this magazine.

The forms are available to download from the BTRA website (www.btra.com.my). Or if you have downloaded the BTRA mobile app, you can join and pay through the app itself. If you have questions about membership, please email bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com and we will respond.

It's been a truly eventful year — for BTRA and for Malaysia — and we can take many positives from these developments. With that, on behalf of the BTRA Committee, I'd like to wish Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Gong Xi Fa Cai to all members, residents and their families in Bukit Tunku, Taman Duta, and beyond.

Muthanna Abdullah

Feedback? Suggestions? Comments?

If you have feedback or comments on Living On The Hill, or would like to suggest topics for future issues, or wish to contribute an article, please don't hesitate to email bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com. Please enter "Living on the Hill" in the subject line for easy reference. We'd love to hear from you!

(Contributions and correspondence may be edited for space and clarity)



DBKL Blueprint for Neighbourhood Cleanliness

City Hall (DBKL) is aiming to upgrade Kuala Lumpur in several ways. One is to encourage local neighbourhoods and their residents' associations to maintain standards of public cleanliness and hygiene in their respective communities. The local council launched an initiative called "DBKL Blueprint Kebersihan dan Penarafan Kawasan Fasa 6" (DBKL Blueprint for Cleanliness Rating).

On Wednesday 1st August, a team of 10 DBKL Blueprint representatives, led by Encik Abdul Rashid Bin Sampooi, Pengurus Kawasan Segambut, Jabatan Pembangunan Komuniti Dan Kesejahteraan Bandar (Segambut Branch Manager, Department of Community Development and Urban Wellbeing), met BTRA President, Dato' Muthanna Abdullah, and Committee Members Dato' JJ Choong, Dato' SY Cheah and Mr BK Tan for a drive around the streets of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta. Also accompanying the group was Ms Yap Yee Vonne, the Political Secretary of YB Hannah Yeoh, the MP for our constituency.

Despite rain earlier in the day, the streets generally looked well kept, especially the roundabout on Jalan Tunku, maintained



Jalan Tunku roundabout, aka "Brahmal's Roundabout"

by Committee Member Mr Brahmal Vasudevan. The DBKL Blueprint team was suitably impressed, not least with the signage! The evaluation will take at least two months, and there is a monetary reward for the neighbourhood that achieves the top score.

Needless to say, the BTRA Committee encourages everyone's cooperation to maintain the appeal and integrity of our neighbourhoods by complying with local laws on such things as separation of household trash and recyclables, care and maintenance of our own property, and neighbourhood security.

DBKL Blueprint Kebersihan team with BTRA Committee Members



YB Hannah Yeoh and BTRA Committee Meet in a First

The last time the BTRA Committee met any senior government officer — municipal or federal — was in the 1990s, when the fledgling group “Friends of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta” (which eventually became Bukit Tunku Residents’ Association) took action against the then Mayor of KL for approving high-rise condominium developments without giving owners of adjoining properties a chance to voice their views, as is required by law.

What a turnaround, then, that the relationship between BTRA and DBKL has taken. Over the years since, the BTRA Committee has worked diligently to build a solid and mutually beneficial relationship with DBKL and public service government agencies. Indeed, GE14 and change of government brought a new MP to our constituency. This presented a fresh opportunity to engage with YB Hannah Yeoh, whose reputation as a hard-working, straight-talking, compassionate and proactive representative of Subang Jaya preceded her.

On Saturday 18th August, the BTRA Committee hosted its first meeting with YB Hannah and representatives of DBKL to discuss ways in which all parties could collaborate for mutual benefit.



BTRA President Dato’ Muthanna Abdullah provided a comprehensive overview of BTRA — its coverage (Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta), population, association membership, neighbourhood security, as well as issues within the neighbourhoods, such as abandoned and derelict properties, road conditions, flooding, and drainage problems.

Right away, YB Hannah zoomed in on how many homes were abandoned and derelict. She suggested working with the relevant department at DBKL to find ways to address this public hazard as a priority. Any assistance would be welcome, as currently, progress is start-stop because individual residents report cases directly to DBKL. With a push from a higher office, the BTRA Committee is optimistic that this long-term problem will be addressed more efficiently.

A key priority for BTRA is “the sanctuary” secondary jungle along Jalan Tunku. The goal is to classify this area as a green reserve to prevent commercial or industrial developers from exploiting the valley. One proposal is to possibly work with WWF Malaysia to make it a nature reserve for selected recreational activity or research. YB Hannah committed to finding out the zoning status of this valley, after which BTRA Committee will decide on next course of action.

Lastly, Dato’ Muthanna asked how residents of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta could help. In this regard, YB Hannah turned to her federal portfolio, the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. She stated that there is a lot of room — and a need — for experienced people to contribute their skills and knowledge in several areas, such as home visits, counselling, child care, and skills development. Anyone who wishes to contribute may find YB Hannah’s office contact details at *her website*.

The meeting proved to be a positive start to sharing of ideas and possible resources. YB Hannah shared a complimentary *Facebook post* about the meeting.

It also seeded the first BTRA member activity for a while — a Gotong-Royong that YB Hannah attended, launched and participated in on 6th October.

The BTRA Committee is continuing to build on this momentum that, with judicious engagement and a little luck, will result in further improvements to Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta over time.

References: YB Hannah Yeoh’s contact details: <https://www.hannahyeoh.com/about-me>



Action on Derelict Properties

The BTRA Environment Sub-Committee met representatives of several public agencies in September and October to discuss the on-going problem of abandoned and derelict properties in Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta. Among these agencies were DBKL (Segambut branch), Department of Health and Environment, the Land Office, and Enforcement Division. A representative of YB Hannah Yeoh's office also attended some meetings. These properties fall into two categories.

One category covers sites under construction with hoardings erected to shield the construction site, or empty plot of land that is not maintained regularly. DBKL will issue a notice to the owner, who can be traced through building plan approvals or permit approvals to install these hoardings. Refusal to comply with DBKL notices results in summonses.

The other category covers completed buildings that are unoccupied, and the property not maintained. Owners can be traced through Assessment accounts and payments,

after which DBKL will issue notices to them to upkeep their property. Refusal to comply results in the Department of Health and Environment (DBKL) entering the grounds to cut grass, trim or remove trees, and fog the property to kill mosquitos. Costs are then billed to the owner.

The Department of Health and Environment (DBKL) will carry out regular monthly inspections on all abandoned and derelict houses, even those still under construction, to check on rubbish dumping, as well as the general state of the grounds (uncut grass, bushes, pools of stagnant water). Those house owners who do not comply with the DBKL health and environmental regulations will be given notice to rectify the situation within a stipulated time-frame. If there is still no action by the house owners, DBKL will proceed with the necessary action and bill the cost to the respective owners.

If you see new hoardings, please try to take a photo of the billboard, if there is one, and email it to bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com with location (e.g. street name).



SELAMATKAN
**KUALA
 LUMPUR**
 #SAVEKL

SaveKL Coalition of Residents' Associations for Sustainable Development

Bukit Tunku Residents' Association is a member of the SaveKL Coalition, which comprises many residents' associations in KL towards a common goal — work with the authorities to make Kuala Lumpur an environmentally sustainable and livable city.

SaveKL chairperson, Tan Sri Abdul Aziz Abdul Rahman, has stated that to achieve such goals, the views of Kuala Lumpur's residents should be given to Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to consider when planning the city's development.

Among the key issues raised in the manifesto of SaveKL are to: democratise the city council; ensure effective community participation; protect green and public spaces; and gazette and enforce the KL Local Plan.

Citizen participation will ensure transparency and accountability in city planning.

At SaveKL's monthly meeting in October, which BTRA attended, members discussed many issues. Foremost among them was the KL Local Plan that has been shelved since its first released to the public for comment around 10 years ago. BTRA was one of those associations commenting at the time.

The plan has come to life again with the new PH Government. At the October meeting, the SaveKL Committee stated that a meeting with the Datuk Bandar would take place, and the SaveKL Committee felt confident that input from residents would be sought. SaveKL members were delighted that the draft plan would soon be gazetted.

However, the Datuk Bandar jumped the gun and proceeded to gazette the KL Local Plan, seemingly without any feedback from KL residents.

Predictably, there are two divergent views on this. On the one hand, some view this development positively, saying that even if the plan is not perfect, at least there is a plan and SaveKL can work with DBKL to correct certain aberrations within the plan.

On the other hand, some members are incensed that KL residents had not been consulted and that there are many alterations to the original plan that will be in conflict with the original printed document.

The coalition is looking forward to the amended document to see which direction to move.

Short Takes

Residents have been most helpful by alerting BTRA Committee members, either individually or through the BTRA mobile app, to unsavoury or suspicious activity in our neighbourhoods. Thank you, and be mindful of your own safety while watching out for our community.

Bird Trapping Alert

A few chaps have been spotted in our neighbourhoods trapping birds, most likely for sale. Some of the birds may be protected. If you see this happening, please help by speaking to the trappers to discourage them from such activity.

To report:

- Call Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Peninsular Malaysia at its 24-hour hotline 1.800.88.5151 (<http://www.wildlife.gov.my/index.php/en/>)
- Send a private message via the Department of Wildlife and National Parks Peninsular Malaysia Facebook page: Jabatan Perhilitan Semananjung Malaysia (<https://www.facebook.com/perhilitanofficial/>)



Indiscriminate garbage dumping

Piles of rubbish, some in garbage bags but much of it as loose debris, have been on the increase in our neighbourhoods. Left outside abandoned property lots, these piles attract urban wildlife scavengers that subsequently spread the debris on to roads, creating hazards for road users, especially at night.

If you spot anyone dumping their garbage anywhere, on any street in our neighbourhoods, please try to take a photo of this activity. If you are able to photograph a vehicle licence plate, that would help to trace the culprits. Please email to bukit.tunku.residents@gmail.com with the location — for example, the street where you saw the dumping.

To report, call Alam Flora hotline at 1.800.88.7472, who can then collect the rubbish on their rounds.



Garbage left outside an empty and derelict property lot on Jalan Bukit Tunku

DBKL and BTRA Collaborate on Neighbourhood Clean-Up

YB Hannah Yeoh Joins The Hill Gotong Royong

It was a good morning for a neighbourhood clean-up — no rain, not too humid and no blazing sun. On Saturday 6th October, approximately 100 residents participated in our first Gotong Royong in recent years. Our MP, YB Hannah Yeoh, along with DBKL representatives, joined the event and were suitably impressed with the civic consciousness that residents demonstrated through this activity. In fact, they remarked that no other neighbourhood (that they know of) to date has shown such strong support for a similar activity as the residents of The Hill showed. YB Hannah saw fit to donate RM5,000 (maximum allowed) to BTRA for other BTRA community activities.

Such feedback is highly encouraging in light of DBKL's assessment of Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta for its Blueprint Kebersihan programme. If we score a high rating, BTRA will receive a cash reward to continue programmes for neighbourhood maintenance and upkeep. More importantly, we will have stronger support from DBKL whenever we need their services.

The event started at 7:30 am at the Taman Tunku car park, with DBKL serving a pre-Gotong Royong snack. In his opening remarks, BTRA President Dato' Muthanna Abdullah emphasised BTRA's concern for

and commitment to our environment, as well as a continued strong relationship with DBKL. YB Hannah acknowledged the strong showing





of residents for this event, and attributed that to our genuine concern for the neighbourhood. She identified the number of derelict and abandoned properties as a key problem and said that her office would work with DBKL to act on this matter. Following YB Hannah's remarks, certificates of appreciation were presented to representatives of the public service agencies who tirelessly ensure that our streets and drains are maintained.

After the formalities, it was off to work! DBKL provided tools of the trade — shovels, wheelbarrows, paint and paint brushes, gloves, garbage bags, baskets. The Gotong Royong focused on Langgak Tunku and Dalaman Tunku; two groups, led by Committee Members Dato' JJ Choong and Mr BK Tan, walked these roads and met "at the top." Some participants opted to give the curbs along Langgak Tunku a fresh coat of paint.

What kind of trash did we pick up? Plastic bottles, bottle caps, plastic bags, cigarette packs, food wrappers, torn sheets of paper, car bumpers, shards of glass, a sheet of tarpaulin half-buried in the soil, and other non-organic unidentifiables.

At 10:00, everyone returned to Taman Tunku for a buffet provided by Frhen's Café and Warisan Tunku.

All in all, it was a successful event. Kudos to the BTRA Committee for forging a solid

relationship with DBKL over the years, which clearly put The Hill on its radar for a number of programmes. We also appreciate the support of YB Hannah, who has demonstrated a high level of proactiveness and commitment to her constituency thus far. YB Hannah *uploaded a video* of the activity on her Facebook page. Lastly, a huge thank-you to residents of The Hill who participated in the Gotong Royong, and who actively contribute to keeping The Hill green and clean.

For broadcast media coverage:
<https://youtu.be/dbRudxxg8i0>
<https://youtu.be/vPQdffhehvc>

Photo credit:
Faylasufiyah Muthanna
 Website: www.faylasufiyah.com
 Instagram: @faylasufiyah



GE14: Reflections of First-Time Voters

Educated in Malaysia and the UK, Taman Duta residents Hannah Merican and C.H. are members of the generation of urban Malaysian millennials who voted for a better Malaysia.

Hannah's story:

I confess: I went into this election thinking my vote wouldn't change anything. I voted believing it was my responsibility as a Malaysian and at the very least I had done my (small) part in trying. After all, it seemed like we had everything against us with every dirty trick in the book being used — mid-week polling day, gerrymandering and cash handouts — all at the cost of winning.

Leading up to the election, I didn't read as many articles as I did in 2013 when I was a student. I had made up my mind a long time ago, way before I had even registered, to vote in 2016 and I didn't want all that negativity in my head.

Growing up, I didn't expect politics to affect me much on a personal level — the same things happened on a day-to-day basis but there was no significant change. That was until 2015 arrived. I was working at The Edge and the government took away our printing licence for exposing 1MDB. I was not involved in any of these articles but I got to experience what it was like working in the media with limited press freedom. They had shot the messenger and let the thief run out the door while we had to pay the price.

There is only so much one can hope for when it comes to a miracle. The night before polling day, I watched Tun Dr Mahathir's speech, which was live-streamed on Facebook. He finished it with the song 'Sejahtera Malaysia' playing in the background with a big roar from the crowd. That song instantly brought me back to my primary school days where all of us had to sing it at school for morning assembly. It was nostalgic to think that I still remembered most of the lyrics.

The song was still stuck in my head the next day when I queued up to vote in a primary school not far from Bukit Tunku. Standing in line to vote, I looked around my surroundings, sad to see that though the school was kept clean, there were probably no physical changes in 30 years. It was definitely in need of a new paint job and a few renovations to improve its facilities. It was in some

way a metaphor for Malaysia; even a minor fix would improve the overall system.

I queued for over an hour as the first-time voters' queue was the longest. I still remember waiting in line, which was slowly moving up the stairs to a classroom on the fourth floor where the polling room was. The sun beat down on this particularly humid day as we all waited. It was nice to see that so many people from all walks of life had shown up to cast their vote.

The constituency of Segambut is pretty diverse. It includes the affluent areas of Bukit Tunku, Taman Duta and Sri Hartamas, while at the other end of the spectrum are the semi-urban areas of Segambut Dalam and Kampung Sungai Penchala. Two different pockets of society with different wants and needs from the government but with the chance to influence change.

It was finally my turn to cast my vote. I walked into the classroom, had my name checked and index finger dipped in indelible ink before I walked in to the voting booth. I took a deep breath before marking a cross on the box of the nominee I supported. Just like that, it was over.

I spent the rest of the day in a fairly relaxed mood since it was a public holiday. In the evening, I made dinner while waiting for the results to come in. We had *Astro Awani* on the TV and a live *Malaysiakini* stream on my laptop. It was a very frustrating process of waiting. On my laptop, they had announced more seats than the TV, which seemed to be taking its time with the results. We kept switching channels to see if any progress had been made. The hours seemed to drag on.

I was frantically messaging people on my phone. What could be happening? The results on *Malaysiakini* showed the both Barisan Nasional and Pakatan Harapan were neck and neck. Then, slowly but surely, I realised we were on the verge of history. Pakatan Harapan had announced that they had won Melaka and Negeri Sembilan. Then, finally what was probably the Goliath — Johor had fallen to PH.

Finally, at 3.00am, Tun Dr Mahathir held a press conference announcing that PH had won enough seats to form a new government. Who would have thought this day would come? I dragged myself to bed after that announcement. Everything felt surreal.

The next day was also equally frustrating. I tried to go about my daily routine at home but it seemed that the swearing in process kept being delayed. Finally, there was an announcement that it was to take place in the evening. Hopefully everything would be settled peacefully.

Driving out for dinner, for a second I regretted taking the main road to the palace. I could see a huge hoard of people parked outside waving flags and cars honking. Was this a riot? As I drove closer I realised I didn't need to be scared.

C.H.'s story:

Voting was a straightforward process, but one with lots of very strange strings attached. I still remember the popular video circulating WhatsApp and social media in the days before, detailing all sorts of procedures you had to follow and things to expect when you turn up at the voting station — and how much of it was entirely wrong. Men having to wear collared shirts, for example; when we turned up and began walking into the building, the first thing we saw were some voters sitting outside saying how that part of the dress code was a hoax. It was better safe than sorry, of course — there was no downside to wearing a collared shirt, but the power of misinformation at a busy time was strong.

After entering, we were sorted to separate queues depending on our age group, and the queue for the youngest category was definitely the longest! Not so fun at the time, but a good sign for the country. The youth seemed engaged: some friends even came up from their work in Singapore to make sure they voted — but on the other hand I also knew quite a few who couldn't manage to take the time off work to come back to vote.

The line inched forward, fortunately shaded from the sun, until it was eventually my turn. A whole room watched by about five or six voting officers, that only one or two voters could go through at a time; a part of me wondered if this was really the most efficient way to do this, but I know it was a tense voting period, and the stations didn't want to take any chances. Compared to all the build-up, the vote itself was simple: dip finger in ink, get a slip, check the box, submit — and all done. I remembered the rumour that your vote would be voided if the slip was smudged, and I kept my finger with ink on it carefully away. The

People were standing on their cars cheering. Malaysians from all walks of life were chanting and waving at the cars driving past. My index finger had become something of a battle scar. I waved it as I drove along.

A lump arose in my throat. I had never felt so proud to be Malaysian in my life. I didn't have to be scared of a riot. This was the people's way of celebrating. This scene happening right in front of me felt so liberating.

I'm writing this now two and a half months after that historic day. The fact that we were able to change government without any violence is why I'm so proud to be Malaysian. A lot of good and bad things have happened since then. I didn't expect a perfect new government and I still don't. There is still a lot of hard work to be done but what I am glad for is that HOPE is what brought us here.

whole experience hadn't quite ended there, though — on the way home, more stories of all the hiccups and twists that happened at other voting stations flooded in on social media. There was a story about a whole room of votes that might not have been valid because the voting slips weren't stamped, until someone spoke up and demanded it was addressed — after hearing this, my father suddenly felt his own slip might have been missing the stamp too, but at that point there was no way to verify — it was just stir spreading more stir.

Looking back, my experience at the polling station was as normal as could be. There was no special amount of excitement in the queues, and the voting process was formal without being intimidating — nothing really that made you feel like you were being part of history. Uncontrolled rumours led up to it, and speculation and sensation happened after, but ultimately while it happened you were just a normal person waiting in a normal line, being walked through a routine. The ink on my finger was like a trophy at first — sort of a status symbol that you took part in having your say — but it stayed on much, much longer than expected. Even months after, in October now, a cousin's finger still has traces of blue.

Ultimately once you stripped away the rumours, voting was simple enough that it was worth it in the end. It's easy to feel that when you're just one voice among thousands, your single vote won't mean anything, but as the time approached, and as a generation we looked around to see that the potential for Malaysia to change was really there, it became clearer and clearer that doing something small to change the course of something very big was important. I think a lot of others realised that, too.

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Selera Street @ Level 4

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Tantalising Taste

Give your day a good boost with a good cup of coffee from Starbucks, Coffee Bean, or Second Cup, brewed to perfection for the perfect occasion. Drop by Dolly Dim Sum for high tea, or if you are craving for Japanese, Rakuzen will satisfy your appetite. No noodle is as good as our non-halal Go Noodle, so go slurp some noodles! If that is not enough, you will find some of the best Chinese hawker food at Food Village, Level 3. Revel in famous flavours like Haagen-Dazs and Baskin Robbins or sink your teeth into a rich, fluffy Krispy Kreme doughnut. For a less sinful pleasure, we have Llao Llao! At the end of the day, enjoy attractive after-work promotions at Lygon Bistro.

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Wellness Wonders

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Market Place

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Small Exercises: Big Gains

Satish Brian, Co-Founder, Afterburn Studio

All of us know that fitness and flexibility are key to maintaining good health and wellbeing, especially as we are living longer lives and, thus, more at risk of age-related diseases. With age comes a host of physical changes, not least our balance, strength, and mobility in general.

Simple exercises done in the comfort and privacy of your home can improve overall health and wellness, and therefore, quality of life. Not everyone wants to go to a gym or fitness club, preferring to roll out the exercise mat at home. Here are five exercises to do at home — no complicated equipment required. As always, if it your first time attempting exercise, do consult your physician to assess your overall health before starting, lest you risk injury.

Seated leg extension on a chair

Sit on a chair with your spine in a neutral position. Keep your knees bent at a 90-degree angle, preferably with your feet flat on the floor. Start raising your feet by extending your knees and pointing your toes up at the end of the movement. Hold for five to 10 seconds at the top; repeat 10 to 15 times for three rounds, with 60-second breaks in between each round.

Benefit: Strengthens and firms the front of the thigh (quadriceps muscle).



Seated shoulder abduction

Sit on chair with a neutral spine, keeping the knees bent at a 90-degree angle, with feet on the floor and arms down at the side of your body. Raise both arms up till about 90 degrees, and hold that position for five to 10 seconds. Repeat 10 to 15 times, for three rounds, with 60-second breaks in between each round.

Benefit: Strengthens and stabilises the shoulder muscles (deltoid) to make day-to-day chores, such as lifting and moving things, easier.

Supine hip extension

Lie on your back flat on the floor while keeping your knees bent at a 45-degree angle, and your arms by the side of your body. Slowly lift your hips as high as you can, using your upper body and shoulders for balance; at the same time make sure the shoulders, hips and knees are in line. Hold for 10 seconds at the top of the movement, then lower your hips slowly; repeat 10 to 15 times for three rounds, with 60-second breaks in between each round.

Benefit: Strengthens muscles on the lower back (erector spinae), buttocks (gluteus), and the back of the thigh (hamstring). Great exercise for core stabilisation and to reduce lower back pain.



Lower back stretch

The lower back is one area that takes a lot of stress every day — walking, sitting, standing, bending and other sudden movements all add pressure on this important part of our body. Over time, the muscles become tight. This then leads to muscle imbalances and increases the risk of lower back pain. Taking care of it properly by stretching will pay dividends later.

Lie on the floor facing up. Bring both knees up to your chest. Hold them with your hands for 30 seconds, progressively bring them closer to your chest, then lower your feet to the ground. Repeat three times with 30-second rests in between.

Benefit: Stretches and relieves lower back muscle, to prevent lower back pain.

Standing leg curl

Stand with a neutral spine, placing your arms on a chair for support. Working one leg, bend your leg from your knee towards your hip. Hold this position for 10 seconds at the top, then lower your leg slowly. Repeat 10 to 15 times for each leg for three rounds, with 60-second breaks in between each round. Finish one leg first, then do the other leg.

Benefit: Strengthens and firms muscles at the back of the thigh (hamstring muscle)

These simple exercises done regularly will help your overall wellbeing, keeping you flexible and injury free. A little investment in time and energy for good health is well worth it!

.....

Satish Brian and his brother, Subash, are founders of Afterburn Studio, a gym specifically for personal fitness training. Qualified trainers themselves, both Satish and Subash, as well as other certified fitness trainers, offer a wide range of fitness programmes for people of all ages.

Afterburn Studio

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Finding Peace Through Adventure

Choong Mek Zhin

Many of us know at least one friend who has been to Nepal, usually for hiking. It is, after all, home to eight of 10 of the tallest mountains in the world, including the tallest of them all. I've always assumed that if one is not an avid hiker or trekker, going there would be a complete waste. This assumption probably led to this country not being on my radar of travel destinations.

So, it was surrealistic when I found myself there recently. I was sipping hot coffee while sitting on a handmade corn husk stool. Outside the traditional village mud house-turned-café, the rain had just started and began blurring out the Himalayan hills all around me. As the rain began pouring in earnest, the café owner's chickens began returning home one by one to share the shelter. At that moment, I thought that everyone could do with such peace in their lives.

Taking In Mother Nature

According to my guide, there are thousands of mountains and hills all over the country. That is an impressive statistic for a country half the size of Malaysia. Kathmandu itself is in a valley surrounded by a few hundred peaks. There is a suitable

The all-seeing eyes of Buddha watch over the world as they are painted on all four sides of the Boudhanath Stupa.



A typical Newari thali that comes with chura, rice that has been flattened into light, dry flakes.

trail for everyone, so engage a guide to help you find it. My experience at the Champa Devi Hill (2278m), under an hour's drive away from the capital city centre, gave me a peek into typical Nepalese village life as well as a feeling of serenity that can be addictive.

Visiting Ancient Holy Sites

There are a few UNESCO World Heritage Sites around the Kathmandu Valley. I visited the Boudhanath Stupa (pronounced stoo-ph), which is considered the largest and oldest stupa in the world. It attracts many Buddhist devotees who can be seen in various forms of devotion here. If the structure looks rather new, belying its 2,500 years, remember that it has gone through ancient wars and most recently, an earthquake that damaged the structure badly and necessitated reconstruction of many parts of the building.

Next, I went to the Pashupathinath Temple. It was teeming with Hindu worshippers. Some 80% of the Nepalese population practises Hinduism, which explains the crowd. The temple is built along the banks of the Bagmati River, into which the ashes of the cremated are scattered. If you are squeamish, better not take too close a look at what's happening as the bodies are cremated on open platforms along the river.



My guide waiting out the rain at a village cafe we stopped at.

Going Around In Squares

There are three famous durbar squares, what they call the plaza area built outside the former royal palaces, in the Kathmandu Valley. All three boast of being a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The Patan Durbar Square is highly recommended due to the wonderful museum-quality gallery it houses, located in the main building of the former palace. Don't be too thrown off by the modern interior of the gallery as you can wander around to the adjacent areas that will afford you a good look at the palace's intricate architecture, which features a lot of artisanal handmade decorations.

Discovering Downtown Kathmandu

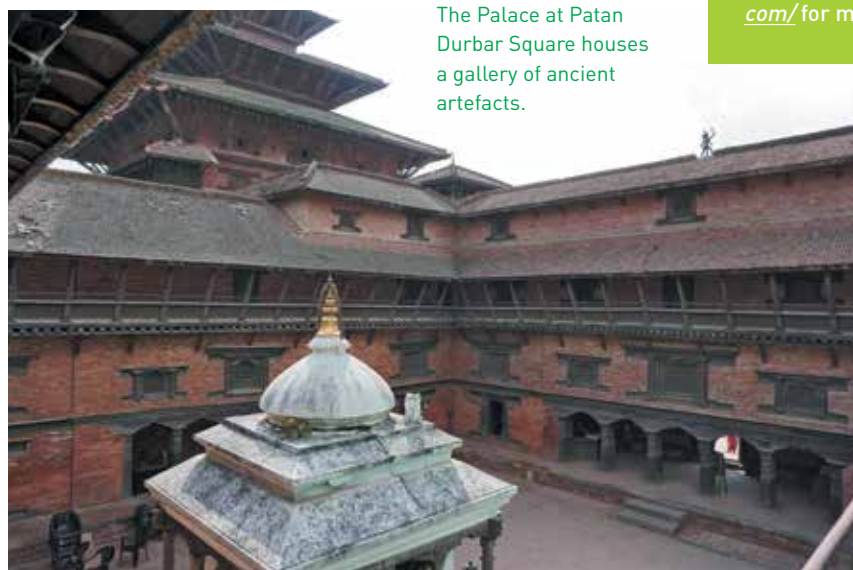
The city centre of Thamel is the main shopping destination for tourists. It features a couple of motored vehicle-free roads, which was a great relief because walking in the city was an adventure on its own, and these short breaks were much appreciated. We're talking about getting stuck in standstill traffic and unable to move forwards or backwards...and I was on foot! Thamel features mostly shops selling hiking gear, local handicraft, with the occasional café.

There is also a nearby haven called the Garden of Dreams,

aptly described by Lonely Planet as being both a 'two-minute walk' and 'a million miles' from central Thamel. In here, you escape into a walled neo-classical garden, which was built almost a hundred years ago by a military bigwig who was inspired by English gardens. The chipmunks will eat out of your hands and you are free to lie down on the soft grass to enjoy the sun and cool breezes. It feels almost out of place in the dusty and oft-noisy city. The Kaiser Café here, which serves up some Austrian dishes as a nod to the country that financed and oversaw the garden's restoration at the turn of the millennium, is also a great stop.

All in all, Kathmandu is city with a rich history and culture. It has much to share with the world and I'm glad I got to learn more about the people and place. I would definitely not say no to another trip there to hear more myths, legends, history and to get larger doses of that tranquillity I tasted in the mountains.

Formerly a reporter for one of the mainstream dailies, Mek Zhin decided to give that up a couple of years ago and is now an entrepreneur running her bespoke hamper creation business. Called It's A Wrap, Mek Zhin was inspired by receiving what she felt were rather bland hampers and decided that there was an opportunity to raise the bar. Visit <https://www.itsawrapkl.com/> for more information.



The Palace at Patan Durbar Square houses a gallery of ancient artefacts.



A little slice of quiet at the Garden of Dreams.



Many streets of Kathmandu are narrow and without walking paths. Best to avoid during rush hour, unless you want to test your nerves of steel.

Driving Across Northern Spain for Culture and Cuisine

Karen Hoh

As long as I can remember, I have held a fascination for Spain. Having visited Madrid, Barcelona, Granada and Sevilla between 2004 and 2013, I had my sights on northern Spain, in particular Basque Country, and by early 2018 it was time to plan in earnest. I even took Spanish classes to make it a more enriching experience.



Fifteen days on the road, covering the autonomous communities of Basque, Cantabria, Asturias, Galicia, Castile and León, and Aragón, we stayed in seven cities and drove to at least 10 other towns along the route. That's the benefit of having a car — the freedom to explore at one's convenience. We covered approximately 2,400 kms, and it was well worth it.

¡Viva España!

My overall enduring memories are of the glorious Romanesque and Gothic cathedrals, churches and monasteries, the true meaning of Siesta, and of course the outstanding gastronomy.

Many people know San Sebastián and Bilbao for pinchos ("pintxos" in Basque language), and for its Michelin starred restaurants. However, Asturias and Galicia are well known for their seafood — grilled octopus is a Galician speciality — and León for its variety of cured meats. So much more was on offer: prawns, scallops, spider crabs, squid, razor clams, mussels, cockles, hake, salted cod, monkfish, langoustine, even barnacles. We were not disappointed with anything we ate wherever we went, even when we opted for dinner at our hotel (after a long day out). And one rarely goes wrong with the "menu del día," almost always great value. As for late dinner hours, it was a small adjustment, and honestly the meals were not heavy and the portion sizes were reasonable. I feel the Spanish do it right — five moderate meals a day (comparatively speaking) to fend off the temptation of snacks and stabilise blood sugar levels.

We crossed part of El Camino de Santiago, or The Way of St James, one of the most important pilgrimages of the Middle Ages. This network of pilgrim routes all end at Santiago de



El Camino symbols

It was to be a self-drive tour across the north of Spain, once again with my indomitable travel buddy Eileen (our third trip together). Six months planning the trip and booking a couple of top restaurants finally came to fruition in September 2018.



Clockwise from top: grilled octopus; raw barnacles; green market in León; empanada menu. Centre: Part of *The Comb of the Wind* sculpture by Eduardo Chillada at Ondarraeta Beach, San Sebastián

Compostela in Galicia, at the magnificent Catedral de Santiago, where it is said the remains of the Apostle are interred. Along the route is the familiar scallop shell symbol on road signs, carved into pavements, and on building walls. Many people take months off to walk part of or the whole El Camino, for their faith or other reasons. We saw walkers from as far as Colombia and Japan, as well as from other parts of Europe.

iSurprising Discoveries!

Beyond food and cathedrals, we discovered interesting facts about the places we visited. For example: in 2013, the United Nations declared León as the birthplace of European Parliamentary Democracy, due to the fact that King Alfonso IX of León joined three states in 1188 and developed laws that protected the people. For context, the Magna Carta came about in 1215. Personally, I think of León as the spiritual capital of Spain.

We discovered that the visionary and influential architect, Antoni Gaudí, designed three buildings outside his home region of Cataluña — two in the region of Castile and León, and one in Cantabria — which were actually built. Gaudí designed a few more buildings for cities in North America and Africa, but those did not materialise. The Leonese are rightly very proud of Gaudí's building, Casa Botines, in their city.



In León: Parador San Marcos, formerly a monastery and hospital (top); the lovely Plaza Mayor

The Basilica de San Isidoro in León is the second most visited church in northern Spain, after the Catedral de Santiago in Galicia. The remains of many Kings of León are kept here, and a cup said to be the *Holy Grail* — the cup from which Jesus Christ drank at the Last Supper and the same cup used to collect the blood of Christ at the crucifixion — is on display at this church. There are, of course, other churches that say they have the *Holy Grail*, but it comes down to one's faith. Who is anyone to dispute?

In Burgos, we discovered how seriously Siestas are taken. After parking our car in a designated city parking lot and feeding enough coins into the machine for the maximum two-hour limit (coin machines similar to the ones here, but actually work!), we noticed the ticket recorded our expiry time four hours from entry. It so happened that our visit coincided with Siesta hours, and parking is gratis for those hours! Four hours for the price of two — a bargain, indeed!

We discovered a decent Jurassic museum in this small coastal town of Colunga in the region of Asturias. What's a dinosaur museum doing in the "middle of nowhere," one may ask. Well, dinosaurs roamed that part of Spain back in the day, and there are recorded footprints of the beasts along the coast. Who knew... The only thing here is that all display explanations are in Spanish, so I'm glad I took language classes.

In Zaragoza, capital of Aragón, we discovered a city with a different vibe. As we entered the city centre, the splendid Basilica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar filled our vision. It reminded me of the mosques in Istanbul, with its Moorish influence on display. The Moor Empire had spread as far



Catedral de Santiago

Basilica de Nuestra Señora del Pilar, Zaragoza



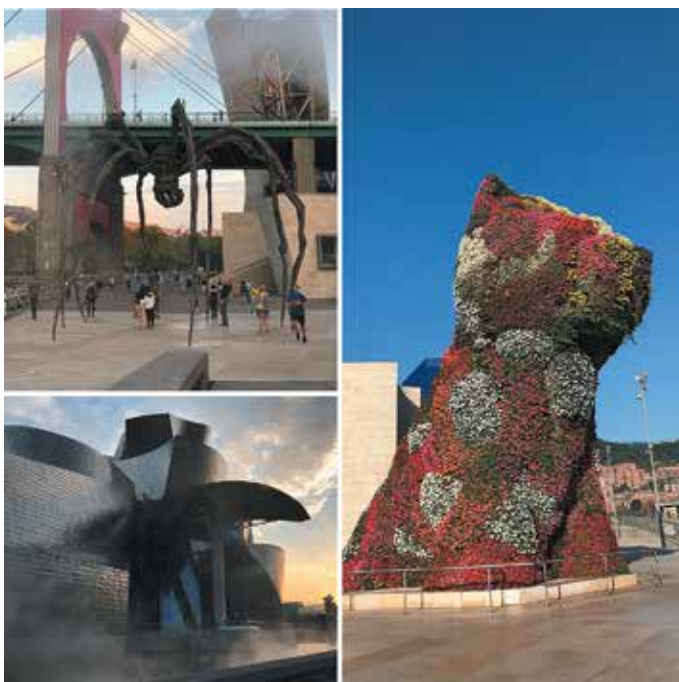
north as Aragón — reclaimed in the 12th century — and left a rich artistic and cultural legacy. Travel guides have referred to Aragón as an under-rated region in terms of tourism, and I intend to return while it's still under-rated.

iNeeds Must!

The Bilbao Guggenheim Museum is the city's landmark building. Designed by Frank Gehry, it's a sexy structure with its seemingly random curves. One can only marvel at the combination of glass and titanium catching the sun's rays at sunrise or sunset, on the banks of the Nervion River. The imposing sculptures by Jeff Koons ("Puppy") and Louise Bourgeois ("Maman") provoked feelings at opposite ends of my emotional spectrum.

Lastly, the trip provided ample opportunity to discover the gastronomic delights of northern Spain, in particular this whole pintxos culture. We were told of the practice of pintxo bar-hopping, in which you eat one or two pintxos at one bar and move to the next one. The accompanying drink is txakoli, a dry, semi-sparking white wine, but you can have beer or water.

Outside the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao



The variety is enormous; some bars have as many as 25 different types of pintxos while others may have 10. And because it's rather competitive, the pintxo chefs have to be creative in their concoctions. After hitting a few bars for sustenance, we popped into any pintxo bar we spotted, just to gawk (and salivate) at the selection.

As for the Michelin starred restaurants, well, that's a story for another day. Suffice it to say that if one visits San Sebastián or Bilbao, going to at least one Michelin starred restaurant is akin to a rite of passage.

It was a truly memorable trip with so many highlights. León and Zaragoza would top my list for return trips — the cities and their environs. In fact, one can say "Mi corazón está en España" — my heart is in Spain!

Planning a visit to Northern Spain?

1. If you are hiring a car, remember to specify automatic transmission if that's your preference, otherwise it is assumed you know how to drive a standard manual transmission. Also, streets in the old town centres are narrow, so avoid large SUVs.
2. Book your Michelin starred restaurant months ahead; allow three hours for the experience. Lunch is a better bet than dinner, so you can walk off the feast after!
3. One hears a lot about pick-pockets nowadays. Fortunately, we weren't victims, and it's probably best not to keep anything in pockets, including zipped pockets. The deft "handiwork" of these professionals can leave you in the lurch. Invest in anti-theft bags or backpacks for better personal security.
4. Do your currency exchange before arrival. The money changers we encountered used a highly unfavourable exchange rate. Banks are no different, even in the larger and more tourist-friendly cities of Santiago de Compostela and León.

References

El Camino de Santiago, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camino_de_Santiago

Pintxos and more pintxos!



Taman Tunku Gets a Makeover

Residents of The Hill (collectively Bukit Tunku and Taman Duta) will soon see a new look to a landmark property in our midst. The buildings in this crescent will be undergoing a major makeover with completion targeted for October 2020.

Taman Tunku crescent will be transformed into a modern neighbourhood centre, primarily catering to The Hill. The refurbishment works will improve the façade, as well as optimise space of the retail lots, including outdoor dining areas, new terraces and walkway extensions. There will be an upgrade for the driveway, parking lots, and useable public space, as well as beautification of both hard and soft landscapes.

Anyone going to Taman Tunku would have noticed work has already started on the residential Blocks C and D, and is scheduled to complete by the end of January 2019. Work on Blocks A and B will start in January 2019, targeting to complete in August the same year. And finally, Blocks E to K will see refurbishment work start in September 2019 and completed in October 2020.

The outcome is that Taman Tunku will be more of a service and social centre, a place for people from near and further afield to get together, for business networking, run errands, and enjoy meals with family, friends and business associates.

A Walk down Memory lane

Older residents may remember Hock Lee's Mini Market, as well as a branch of Southern Bank Berhad, on the ground floor. The former changed hands and eventually gave way to an F&B provider, while Southern Bank was acquired by CIMB Bank in 2007.

Other long-time retailers include the hair salon, which has been there for more than 20 years, and Sid's Pub, which opened here in 2009. There used to be a realtor in the lot now occupied by Kenny Hills Bistro, a bakery-café in the lot occupied by Frhen's Café, and the lot that is now Warisan Tunku was another Malaysian food restaurant.

Selangor Properties Berhad built the blocks — probably one of the first residential developments of its kind in Kuala Lumpur — in the 1960s. Despite its age, the units continued to attract and retain tenants over the years for many reasons, with some residential units make way for SOHO (Small Office, Home Office) initiatives. Location is top notch as The Hill is still one corner of Kuala Lumpur that is green and relatively serene,

surrounded by secondary jungle. In addition, the majority of Hill residents are from the mid-to-upper demographic segment — professionals, retired but active individuals, and some entrepreneurs.

More Retailers?

The current crop of retailers at Taman Tunku enjoy consistent customers, not only from The Hill, but also from other neighbourhoods. The F&B outlets at Taman Tunku are convenient meeting venues with available parking, although this can get a bit congested at times. Nonetheless, it's not enough of a deterrent for people who want to sample fare from any of the F&B providers in the crescent. Sid's Pub is practically an institution there, with Kenny Hills Bakers a favourite of many KL-ites.

So, unsurprisingly, after more than 50 years, Selangor Properties has decided it's time for a full makeover, driven by changing lifestyles and consumption habits of residents of The Hill, which now includes some late Gen-Xers and Millennial Entrepreneurs.

Asked if the number of retailers in the crescent will increase, the short answer is "yes." Selangor Properties has decreed that they will have unique retail concepts that add value to The Hill community, as well as attract customers from beyond its "front yard" to dine there. Likewise, non-F&B outlets will also need to offer something different that meets the changing needs of the core community and its environs, which includes other upscale neighbourhoods such as Damansara Heights, Mont Kiara and even Taman Tun Dr Ismail.

New Look, New Needs

Most people will agree that after 50 years, some buildings do need a makeover to stay relevant. It also makes good business sense to upgrade and improve facilities to retain loyal customers and attract new ones. With this in mind, Selangor Properties has purposefully planned extended covered walkways, preserving green social spaces within the development and recrafting the traffic flow within Taman Tunku to ease future traffic flow.

For the most part, residents of The Hill are looking forward to the refurbished Taman Tunku — who doesn't like "new and improved," after all? Selangor Properties, who had the foresight to build these blocks in Kenny Hills all those years ago, is rising to the challenge of providing facilities for our changing lifestyle needs and habits.

*For leasing enquiries and appointments to view the Taman Tunku apartments, contact CG Asia agents:
Stephen Goh, 012.209.3399; Veronica Ng, 012.292.4030
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- Associate Member** - Applicable to family members of Ordinary Member residing with Ordinary Member
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- Corporate Member** (Applicable to corporation owning one or more properties in Bukit Tunku)

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Signature Of Application :

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