

residents' corner

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR BENG CHAI, A SHELTER 3 TEENAGER BOY, TO LEARN ABOUT JOURNALISM



Beng Chai in a group photo taken during the Star's BRAT Programme in Penang

I was happy to learn that I was selected to be part of the Star's BRAT programme. On 24 May 2008, I met a group of seniors and participants of the programme at Puduraya bus station. The bus left the station at 7:15 am and reached Penang at 1:30 pm. We were taken to Sunway Hotel in Georgetown.

I shared my room with Tan Kel Vin, Tan Yew Chong and Teh Eng Kim. We were briefed by the staff from the Star on how we should go about collecting information and taking pictures. Then we were divided into four groups of nine each. The very first day they put us on the field at Penang Road. It was an exciting experience for me to be going around taking pictures of Penang Road.

Our first assignment was to visit Chowrasta Market and find out what the place is famous for. The place is famous for Nutmeg pickles. Nutmeg is one of the tourist attractions in Chowrasta. Some of my team mates interviewed the hawkers and I took pictures.

On the second day, we visited Penang Hill. We had the opportunity to ride the historical tram that goes up the hill. I interviewed a twenty year old tourist named Adam from Iowa City, USA. He is a student in landscape architecture. This was his first trip to Malaysia; he had visited Kuala Lumpur and Singapore in the previous week. He appreciated Malaysian food for the variety and the cost.

After breakfast we spent some time taking group pictures and saying good bye to our new friends. Then we left for the bus station to board a bus to Kuala Lumpur.

I am grateful to the organizers for the opportunity given to me. I hope to make journalism my career.

The whole camp was about journalism and how news appeared in the papers every day.



DONATION SLIP

Yes! I will help you help our children!

• Please fill in block letters

Full Name : Company / Organization / Dr / Mr / Mrs / Ms

Address :

Tel : (H) (O)

(h/p) Fax :

Nature of business (if applicable) :

Email:

☐ Yes, please include me in the Shelter newsletter mailing list.

☐ I would like to sponsor a child. Please contact me.

☐ Please provide me with more information to serve on a voluntary basis.

☐ I would like to pledge RM per month for months / year(s).

☐ Enclosed is a crossed cheque / bank draft / money order no. payable to **Shelter** for RM

☐ Please charge my donation of RM to:

☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ American Express

Card Number :

Name on the card :

Expiry Date :

Signature : Date :

Started in 1981, Shelter is a registered voluntary welfare organization for children and teenagers who have been abandoned, neglected, orphaned or abused. Shelter is supported by donations from the general public.
ALL DONATIONS TO SHELTER ARE TAX EXEMPT. (No.8954 / 90)



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SHELTER NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT!



Only RM8.00 per copy!

Shelter is a registered welfare organization set up in 1981, and operates homes for children and teenagers who have been abused, abandoned or neglected. Currently, Shelter has 4 homes. It also provides other services for families in crisis and assistance to the underprivileged community.

Shelter is supported by donations from the general public.

This is one of the many fund raising projects by Shelter. All proceeds will go towards Shelter.

We would be most grateful if you could participate in this desktop calendar project and contribute towards a more caring Malaysia.

Sponsor A Shelter Child

If you have any questions regarding Shelter's Sponsor a Child Programme, or are interested to be a sponsor, please call Deborah at Shelter office or you could download the Sponsor Form from the website (www.shelterhome.org) and send it to our postal address. Sponsorship is for a minimum period of 12 months and most of our sponsors continue with this meaningful experience of helping change the world for at least one disadvantaged child after just trying it for one sponsorship term. So, do not delay and call us now at 03-7955 0663.

Volunteer

Interested in volunteering at Shelter? Do contact Elaine for more details at 03-7955 0663 today!

We appreciate all that you do to make a difference! Child sponsors and volunteers are invaluable to us!

Dropzone

DropZone is a Shelter youth community centre project, which offers an alternative hang-out place for young people and runs activities which focus on the personal development of youth.

Contact Keat Lim at 03-7782 7448 if you would like to know more about DropZone's activities – happenin' Mondays to Fridays from 11.00am till 6.00pm.

DropZone is at: No.92-A, 1st Floor, Jalan Otman 1/14 (PJ Old Town), 46000 Petaling Jaya.

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Shelter Newsletter
July ~ Sep 2008

News

Current economy vs. cost of living for Malaysians and marginalized groups

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) for June rose to a 27-year high of 7.7%. This figure is slightly more than double the May CPI of 3.8%. The 7.7% is also the highest since April 1981 when the CPI was recorded at 10.8%. The substantial rise in the price of petrol and diesel announced by the Government beginning 5 June 2008 is the main reason for the surge, said Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Shahrir Abdul Samad. He said the inflation would probably remain at 7.7% for July because it would see the impact of increase in the electricity tariff.

The Star, 24 July 2008

The following was reported on The Sunday Star, 22 June 2008; in relation to price hike on 5 June 2008;

- Kuala Lumpur City Hall recorded a drop of almost 12,000 cars entering the city daily a week after the fuel price hike;
- Queues at LRT stations are getting longer and car parks are bursting at the seams;
- A bus company in Putrajaya has recorded a 10% increase in the number of passengers;
- Daily traffic volume on the Penang Bridge has dropped by 7% from the previous daily volume of 67,000 vehicles;
- Sales of motorcycles have increased by up to 25%. Demand is higher than supply now;
- And more women are buying scooters.

The cost of living, social issues, the crime rate and illegal immigrants – these are the issues that matter most to Malaysians, according to a survey conducted ahead of the general election.

How are Malaysians, especially the lower income group, coping with the country's worst inflation in 10 years (Business Times, 6 June 2008)? Consider this, how is it possible to live with an income less than RM500 per month, followed by the increase of house rental and other price hikes that hit a low income household.

On the streets and in homes, skyrocketing prices are shaping up into a terrible nightmare that is eating into their home income, their savings and their lifestyle. Hardly a week passes without news of one price rise or another, with each increase seemingly begetting another. Rice and petrol prices at the pump – as well as the cost of driving on the road – have gone up beyond recognition. I often wonder how the unfortunate are going to keep up with these extra costs of living.

Recently, we did a home visitation in Kampung Baiduri. Mr. Muthu* and wife have 3 daughters aged 12 to 20 years old. He is paralyzed and is blind; his wife is needed in the home to look after him and the younger daughter. The

Fuel price hike (2004-2008)



Date	Petrol (RM)	Diesel (RM)
1 May 2004	1.37	0.78
1 Oct 2004	1.42	0.83
1 March 2005	1.42	0.88
1 May 2005	1.52	1.08
31 July 2005	1.62	1.28
28 Feb 2006	1.92	1.58
5 June 2008	2.70	2.58

Azlan Zamhari / Malaysiakini

eldest daughter is the sole breadwinner in the family of five with income of RM500 per month.

The words of a song by Evie Tornquist, *"The good things that you got"*. For the good things that you've got are for many just a dream. So be thankful for the good things that you've got.

In this song it talks about people who are without a leg and we complain about our shoes. People without a home and we complain about our house and how small it is.

There is another song by Phil Collins, *"Another day in paradise"* and it talks about us having a home to live in but to a street child who moves from place to place – to her living in a safe place is paradise.

We need to be thankful always for things that we have. Sometimes we take for granted. We need to be thankful for good health, family and friends and of course the simple things in life.

(*All names in the stories have been changed to protect the identities of victims and their families.)

happenings



Shelter Community School 3 – Refugee Work

DAILY ACTIVITIES AT SHELTER COMMUNITY SCHOOL...



English class



Pre-schoolers' class



Lunch break

VOLUNTEERS HAVING FUN WITH THE CHILDREN...



Sing-along session



Games time

REFUGEES IN MALAYSIA



There are some 50,000 refugees and asylum seekers in Malaysia today who are mostly Muslim Rohingyas, Chins and other ethnic minorities from Myanmar, as well as other countries.

Unlike migrants, refugees do not choose to leave their countries; they are compelled to do so because of difficult living conditions in their home countries such as armed conflict, serious public disorder and complex human rights issues.

WHERE DO THEY LIVE?



The refugee communities are scattered throughout Malaysia, living mostly in the Klang Valley. There are no refugee camps in Malaysia. Instead, refugees share living spaces in groups of up to 20 people, living in low cost apartments, urban villages or housing estates side by side with Malaysians.

happenings



CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (CRC)

The UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) on 20 November 1989. The CRC is a legal treaty, which provides a comprehensive framework for children's rights. The CRC is significant as children's rights are recognized as human rights and for the first time children are set apart as worthy subjects of international rights and protection. The rights based approach is essential in promoting and protecting children's rights as it marks a paradigm shift of perceiving children as objects of charity and of their parents to children as an individual and as members of the human family and thus, equally entitled to fundamental rights.

Malaysia acceded to the CRC on the 17 February 1995. There are four sets of rights that the CRC seeks to protect –

- The right to survival: The right to survival recognized that a child is entitled to the basic right to life, to a healthy life and an adequate standard of living.
- The right to development: Within this conceptual framework of the right to development is a child's right to develop his or her personality through education.
- The right to protection: These impose obligation upon States Parties and every member of society to safeguard children from all forms of abuse, sexual exploitation and illicit use of narcotic drugs. It also addresses the rights of children who are in need of special protection, such as children involved in armed conflicts, refugee children and children going through the process of adoption.
- The right to participation: Another noteworthy feature of CRC is the inclusion of children in the decision making process. This includes participation and self expression of children consistent with their evolving capacities, particularly in decisions that affect them. Children are no longer passive subjects but active subjects of rights. Further if children are not given a voice, their invisibility would perpetuate their vulnerability and they would be open to exploitation and abuse.



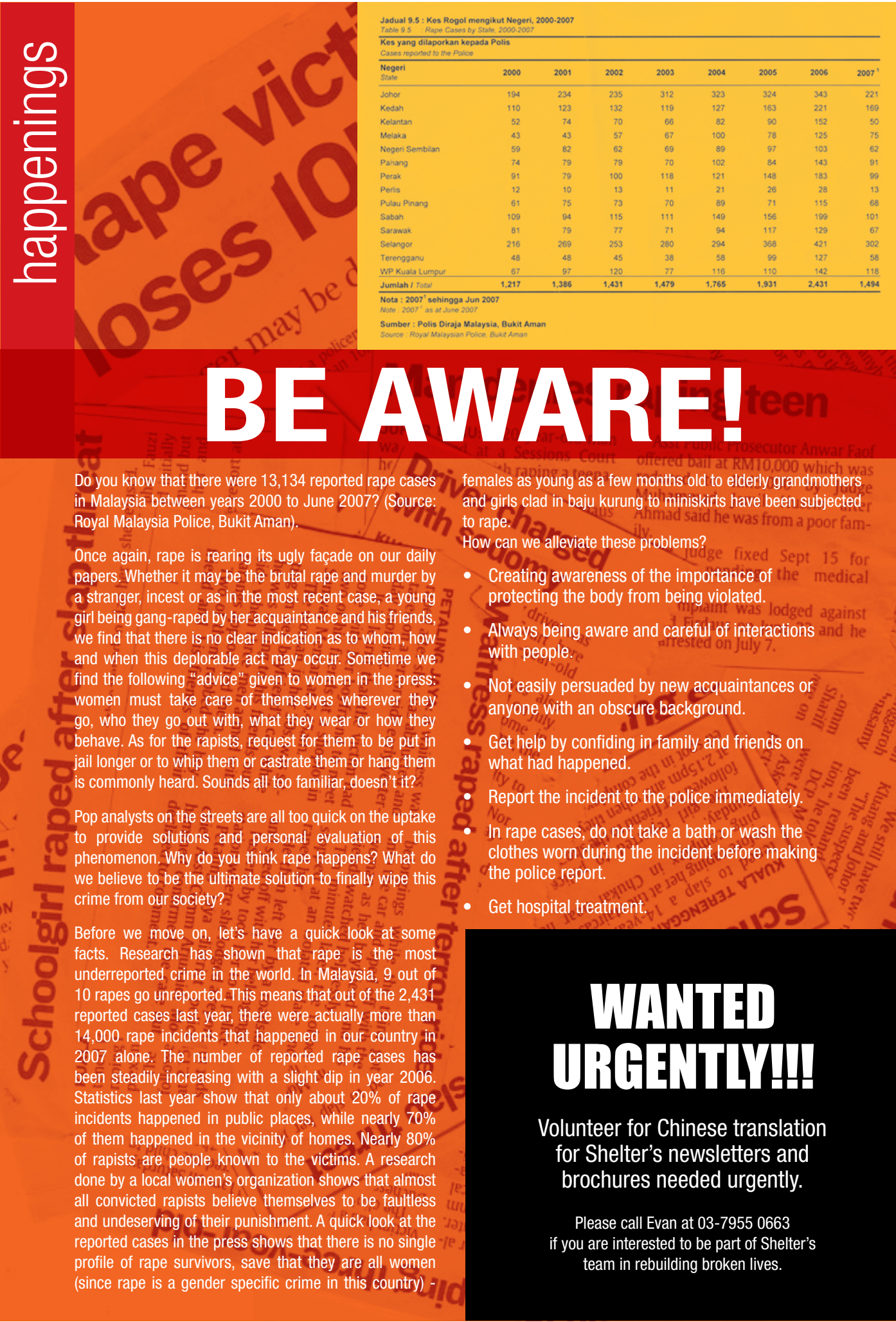
Over in Malaysia, 13 years on, some of the recommendations made during a Suhakam round table discussion 2 years ago are still of great concern to Shelter. Among them are:

- Prioritizing Children's Cases in Court – Court cases involving children must be prioritized and the speedy disposal of the cases. It is recommended that cases for children should be disposed off within 3 months. For minor offence, cautioning of the child should be used instead of resorting to bringing them to court.
- Training for Court Officer – Advisers, magistrates and probation officers need further training to sensitize and prepare them for the rigours of the child justice system.
- To use imprisonment only as a last resort for child offenders – In this regard, research should be carried out to study the various means of effective sentencing policies involving children.
- Right to Education for Children in Detention – The Government needs to develop policies to ensure that children in detention are ensured their rights to education even during their period of detention since education will give them a chance to reform and become good members of the society.
- Name, Nationality and the Preservation of Identity – There should be an increase in awareness, with regard to information on registration, access to registration and the formulation of training for registration staff so as to sensitize them to the plight of unwed and/or single mothers thereby reducing stigmatization.
- Protection Issues – Legislation, education programs to protect the child from physical/mental abuse, maltreatment and social programs for the prevention of abuse must take into consideration and re-assess the emotional welfare of children.
- Rehabilitative Care for Children – There is a need to heighten awareness on the importance of mental and emotional health. Parents and guardians should be encouraged to seek counseling or other psychological help to facilitate the child's emotional recovery and rehabilitation of offenders.



the human rights of children

happenings



Jadual 9.5 : Kes Rogol mengikut Negeri, 2000-2007
Table 9.5 : Rape Cases by State, 2000-2007
Kes yang dilaporkan kepada Polis
Cases Reported to the Police

Negeri / State	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007 ¹
Johor	194	234	235	312	323	324	343	221
Kedah	110	123	132	119	127	163	221	169
Kelantan	52	74	70	66	82	90	152	50
Malaka	43	43	57	67	100	78	125	75
Negeri Sembilan	59	82	62	69	89	97	103	62
Pangang	74	79	79	70	102	84	143	91
Perak	91	79	100	118	121	148	183	99
Perlis	12	10	13	11	21	26	26	13
Pulau Pinang	61	75	73	70	89	71	115	68
Sabah	109	94	115	111	149	156	199	101
Sarawak	81	79	77	71	94	117	129	67
Selangor	216	269	253	280	294	368	421	302
Terengganu	48	48	45	38	58	99	127	58
W.P. Kuala Lumpur	67	97	120	77	116	110	142	118
Jumlah / Total	1,217	1,385	1,431	1,479	1,765	1,931	2,431	1,484

Nota : 2007¹ sehingga Jun 2007
Note : 2007¹ as of June 2007
Sumber : Polis Diraja Malaysia, Bukit Aman
Source : Royal Malaysian Police, Bukit Aman

Do you know that there were 13,134 reported rape cases in Malaysia between years 2000 to June 2007? (Source: Royal Malaysia Police, Bukit Aman).

Once again, rape is rearing its ugly façade on our daily papers. Whether it may be the brutal rape and murder by a stranger, incest or as in the most recent case, a young girl being gang-raped by her acquaintance and his friends, we find that there is no clear indication as to whom, how and when this deplorable act may occur. Sometime we find the following "advice" given to women in the press: women must take care of themselves wherever they go, who they go out with, what they wear or how they behave. As for the rapists, request for them to be put in jail longer or to whip them or castrate them or hang them is commonly heard. Sounds all too familiar, doesn't it?

Pop analysts on the streets are all too quick on the uptake to provide solutions and personal evaluation of this phenomenon. Why do you think rape happens? What do we believe to be the ultimate solution to finally wipe this crime from our society?

Before we move on, let's have a quick look at some facts. Research has shown that rape is the most underreported crime in the world. In Malaysia, 9 out of 10 rapes go unreported. This means that out of the 2,431 reported cases last year, there were actually more than 14,000 rape incidents that happened in our country in 2007 alone. The number of reported rape cases has been steadily increasing with a slight dip in year 2006. Statistics last year show that only about 20% of rape incidents happened in public places, while nearly 70% of them happened in the vicinity of homes. Nearly 80% of rapists are people known to the victims. A research done by a local women's organization shows that almost all convicted rapists believe themselves to be faultless and undeserving of their punishment. A quick look at the reported cases in the press shows that there is no single profile of rape survivors, save that they are all women (since rape is a gender specific crime in this country).

females as young as a few months old to elderly grandmothers and girls clad in baju kurung to miniskirts have been subjected to rape.

How can we alleviate these problems?

- Creating awareness of the importance of protecting the body from being violated.
- Always being aware and careful of interactions with people.
- Not easily persuaded by new acquaintances or anyone with an obscure background.
- Get help by confiding in family and friends on what had happened.
- Report the incident to the police immediately.
- In rape cases, do not take a bath or wash the clothes worn during the incident before making the police report.
- Get hospital treatment.

WANTED URGENTLY!!!

Volunteer for Chinese translation for Shelter's newsletters and brochures needed urgently.

Please call Evan at 03-7955 0663 if you are interested to be part of Shelter's team in rebuilding broken lives.