

SUNWAYIAN

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The Sunway Campus Magazine





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IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

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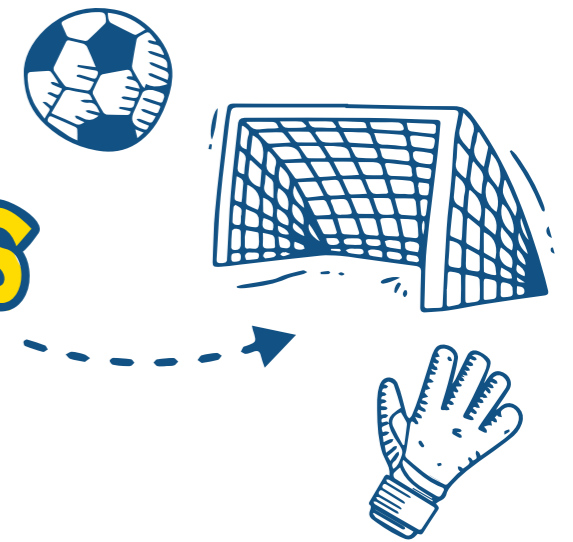
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hello sunwayians



And we are live 🗣️ The whistle blows, the crowd rises, and the 21st issue of Sunwayian is underway. We are setting the pace and bringing in the spirited voices from all of you.

This edition is not just a match, but a full issue of energy, grit, and moments at the #MostHappeningCampus that makes you sit forward in your seat.

Right from our Story Highlight, we kick things off strong as our beloved international community at Sunway shares their thoughts and excitement for the 2026 FIFA World Cup. Tell us which country are you backing, and which player are you rooting for? Let us spread the World Cup fever 🌍

We give a standing ovation to the roaring #CampusWithAConscience initiative by Sunway University, in collaboration with our long-term partner, BookXcess. In celebration of World Book Day, 120 books were gifted to Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-kanak Cacat Taman Megah, making a meaningful difference in young lives.

The tempo remains high as the momentum carries through each page, with student works, from a reflective personal essay by Khairina Aliya from A-Level, to captivating artworks by Clarissa Law from Foundation in Arts, and a thoughtful poem by Nazia Binti Mohamad Azam from Foundation in Arts, each contributing their own distinct voice and colour to the game.

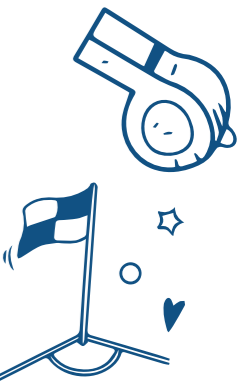
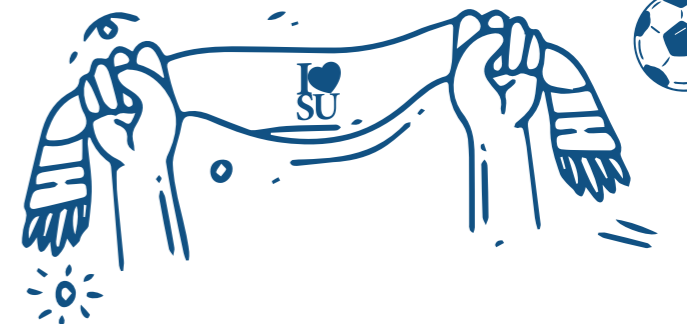
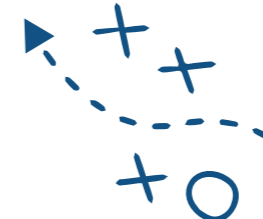
As we move further through this issue, let us take a mid-game pause to shine a spotlight on our Sunway Stars. This edition features Farha Fatima Yar Khan from India, a 44-year-old postgraduate student and mother of two. Now pursuing her Master of Education at Sunway University, her journey from physiotherapy to motherhood and back to academia proves that growth has no age limit.

Back in play, we turn to an inspiring trio, three alumni brothers who have made a powerful run to success, proudly earning the Chancellors Scholarship. Their journey is built on discipline, unity, and an unwavering commitment to giving their best in everything they pursue. This is teamwork at its finest, and a performance that truly deserves recognition.

What a season it has been.

As the final whistle approaches, we hope Sunwayians continue to journey through this issue with us, finding moments that inspire and resonate along the way.

This magazine is a space where voices come together, where experiences are shared, and where ideas take shape. Who knows, you might just find the spark that leads to your next breakthrough. The next story we feature could very well be yours.





CAMPUS UPDATES

Sunway University Among Southeast Asia's Top 5 Institutions



Sunway University has been recognised as one of the top five institutions in Southeast Asia by Times Higher Education (THE). This inaugural pilot ranking focuses specifically on Southeast Asia as a rapidly advancing region in the global higher education landscape. This latest milestone is a testament to Sunway University's identity as a mission-driven, fifth-generation university.



Sunway University Fosters Creativity and Lifelong Learning

Sunway University's Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences is partnering with seven industry leaders across the arts, media and creative industries. These collaborations connect education with practice, creating opportunities for students to engage directly with industry through internships, collaborative projects and live productions.



A Tradition of Giving During Ramadan

In the spirit of Ramadan, Sunway University's School of Hospitality and Tourism Management continued its Bubur Lambuk initiative, led by Chef Muhammad Haziq and students. Together, they prepared 450 cups using 15kg of rice sponsored by Jasmine Food Corporation, sharing them with the campus community in a spirit of generosity and compassion.

SDS Hosts Global Media Workshop with Middlesex University



Sunway Diploma Studies (SDS) Department of Communication organised a global media workshop in collaboration with Middlesex University, engaging around 80 students in an interactive learning experience led by Dr Mita Lad. The session explored digital media trends and audience engagement, featuring a hands-on pitching activity where students created promotional content.



MUFY Students Give Back Through Community Service Initiative

Monash University Foundation Year (MUFY) students and staff took part in the Beyond the Plate community service initiative with The Assembly Soup Kitchen, preparing meals for those in need. The activity fostered empathy, teamwork, and a strong sense of social responsibility while encouraging meaningful community engagement.



Sunway TES College Johor Bahru Honours SPM Trial Top Achievers

Sunway TES College Johor Bahru organised the Sunway TES Merit Award Ceremony to recognise students who achieved excellent results in their SPM Trial Examination 2025. The ceremony celebrated their dedication, resilience, and consistent effort throughout their academic journey, while encouraging them as they prepare for the upcoming SPM examination.

SIS KL Football Team Goes Across the Causeway



The Sunway International Schools (SIS) KL football team not only watched the pre-season clash between Arsenal F.C. and Newcastle United F.C. under Singapore's bright stadium lights, but also took to the pitch for a friendly match against SIS Iskandar Puteri, making it an unforgettable trip filled with teamwork and school spirit.



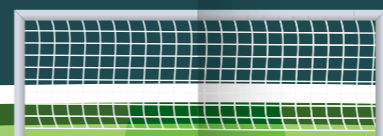
Exchanging International Cultures at SIS Iskandar Puteri

SIS Iskandar Puteri was delighted to welcome students from Otani High School, Japan, for a meaningful visit filled with learning, friendship, and shared experiences. Moments like this served as a reminder how education connects people beyond borders.



Learn Science through Discovery

Grade 6 students at SIS Iskandar Puteri explored the phases of matter through hands-on experiments, strengthening their critical thinking and learning to draw evidence-based conclusions.





SUNWAY UNIVERSITY TOPS GRADUATE EMPLOYABILITY FOR THE FIFTH YEAR

Talentbank's Graduate Employability Index, Malaysia's most trusted employer-driven benchmark for assessing graduate employability, has recently released the 2026 National Graduate Employability Index. The Index evaluates graduates from higher education institutions across Malaysia based on comprehensive employer surveys, including preferred universities for recruitment, hiring volume, and future hiring intentions. For the fifth consecutive year, Sunway University has emerged as the top university in Malaysia for graduate employability.

This comes after Sunway University's latest recognition by AppliedHE as the #1 Private University in Southeast Asia, marking its third consecutive year leading regional private higher education in ASEAN. The University has also achieved a significant milestone in the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings 2026, climbing to the 301-350 band globally. These accomplishments reaffirm Sunway University's status as the top non-government-linked private university in Malaysia and ASEAN, reflecting its strong research impact, high graduate employability, and global outlook.

Professor Sibrandes Poppema, President and Vice Chancellor of Sunway University, said, "Being recognised as Malaysia's top university for graduate employability for the fifth consecutive year is a proud moment for Sunway University. As a mission-driven, 5th generation university, we are committed to delivering industry-relevant education, nurturing future-ready talent, and fostering meaningful partnerships that empower our graduates to thrive in a rapidly evolving global workforce. This achievement reflects the dedication of our students, faculty, and partners in driving impact through knowledge and innovation."

One of the key drivers behind this accolade is Sunway University's vision of nurturing well-rounded, future-ready leaders through its Success X-Factor Coaching initiative. This signature programme connects students with educators, industry professionals, and senior leaders who offer valuable insights, real-world perspectives, and mentorship.

Together, they form a strong support network that empowers students to navigate challenges, unlock their potential, and confidently prepare for success beyond graduation.



AVENUE OF ACHIEVEMENTS

Sunway University Student Wins Bronze in Water Polo

We are proud to celebrate Dylan Yeoh Zhen Lin, Sunway University's first year Bachelor of Electronic and Electrical Engineering (Hons) student, for representing the Penang state and winning Bronze in the 61st MILO/NSC/MAS Malaysia Age Group Water Polo Championship 2026. The national-level championship was held at the Negeri Sembilan Aquatic Centre, bringing together top young athletes from across Malaysia.



Sunway Young Scholar Triumphs on the Global Stage

Congratulations to Isabelle Yau Li Shuang, Sunway University's final-year Bachelor of Information Systems (Hons) (Data Analytics) student, on being selected as the Esri Malaysia Young Scholars Award 2026 Grand Prize Winner. As part of this prestigious recognition, she will receive an all-expenses-paid trip with full access to the Esri User Conference and the Esri Education Summit in San Diego, California, alongside other prizes.



Sunway College JB Student Earns Leadership Honour

Lee Cheng Xi, a Victoria University Bachelor of Business student at Sunway College Johor Bahru (JB), was honoured with the 'Most Outstanding Youth Club President Award' at the JCI Malaysia Area South Q3 Awards. Under her leadership, the JCI Youth Sunway Business Club JB also received the 'Most Outstanding JCI Youth Programme Award' for its impactful initiatives.



A-Level Top Performers Receive Oxbridge Offers

Eight students from Sunway College have secured offers from Oxbridge, including Daniel Abraham George, Liong Ka Lun, and Vijay Arrendra Vijendren, who received offers from the University of Oxford. Meanwhile, Chuah Jia Heng, Eleanor Eng Yee Hui, Oscar Yu Yang Xin, Kai Lee Synn Wei, and Keane Wong were offered places at the University of Cambridge.



Skating on Ice like a True Pro

A big congratulations to Ian Seok from Sunway International Schools (SIS) KL for successfully taking home the bronze medal in the Asian Division at the Johor International Ice Hockey Tournament 2026 as a defenseman. We are immensely proud of his achievement.



SIS KL Student Conquers the National Pool

Winona Tay from SIS KL completely dominated the 61st MILO / MAS Malaysia Invitational Age Group Swimming Championships 2026, bagging gold, silver and bronze medals across various categories, including team freestyle relay, team medley relay as well as individual butterfly and individual freestyle among others. Her hard work, resilience, and passion continue to inspire our community.





The countdown to the FIFA World Cup has officially begun, and excitement is already building across campus. Set to kick off in June 2026, the 2026 FIFA World Cup promises late night matches, passionate debates, and unforgettable moments as the world comes together for football's biggest stage.



Netherlands

**Professor Sibrandes Poppema
President and Vice Chancellor
of Sunway University**

In the Netherlands, many people will gather in bars, cafes, and around large screens in city centres to watch football. We've been finalists three times, so yes, we could win the next World Cup. The betting odds are 20/1, suggesting a 6-8% chance on paper, but in real life, it's 50/50: you either win or you don't.



FIFA WORLD CUP 2026



We spoke to students and staff from diverse backgrounds to explore their anticipation for the games and what football means to them. From national pride and childhood traditions to friendly rivalries between countries, the World Cup becomes a shared language that connects cultures across campus. These perspectives create a lively mix of stories and celebrations, turning the tournament into more than just a competition, but a reflection of Sunway's international community and the unifying global spirit of football.

**Professor Mayco A. Santaella
Dean of the Faculty of Arts
and Social Sciences at
Sunway University**

In Argentina, people follow a "cábala", a superstition or tradition believed to bring good luck, such as wearing the same jersey every match, sitting in the same spot while watching, or eating the same food before a game. Another thing we always experience during World Cup is new songs used as stadium chants. There's a new song that just came out, which helps capture the passion for football and everything around it.



Argentina



**Dhruv Ashutosh Ganage
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in
Industrial Statistics**

The World Cup is a fantastic way for people to learn about other cultures. Because the tournament moves to a different nation every four years, it brings attention to the traditions and lifestyle of the host country.



India



**Dashvin Kumar A/L Suresh Kumar
Bachelor of Science in
Computer Science (Hons)**

When there's a goal scored, I'd say "Gila lah". I think it's the best Malaysian slang, not too dramatic, not too flat, just the right amount of hype that any Malaysian would instantly get, especially when it's one of the big teams 🏆

Malaysia



**Budoor Mohammed
Khazaal Al-Tikriti
Bachelor of Science (Hons)
in Marketing**

In Iraq, we usually celebrate the World Cup by heading out into the streets, driving around with Iraqi flags, music, and high energy. It becomes a moment of unity, where everyone shares the same excitement and pride.

Iraq



**Yelizaveta Krupskaya
Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Marketing**

In Turkmenistan, people typically watch games at home with family and friends. During the World Cup, even those who don't usually follow football get caught up in the excitement and start tuning in.

Turkmenistan



**Kim Dae Yeol
Bachelor of Chemical Engineering (Hons)**

Heung-min Son is one of the key players on the South Korean national team and is famous worldwide. Kang-in Lee is another key player, known for his fantastic dribbling skills, who plays for Paris Saint-Germain. I'm excited to see them in action during the World Cup!

South Korea



**Hansley Sunday
Macharia Wanjagi
Bachelor of Science (Hons)
in Medical Biotechnology**

If Sunway students formed a World Cup team, I think Business Management will excel because a good team needs leadership and teamwork.

Kenya



Now it's your turn. Who are you rooting for this FIFA World Cup 2026?

Send us a shoutout to your favourite player or team, and we will feature it on Sunway Campus TV to spread the World Cup fever.





A Shared Gift of Reading

In conjunction with World Book Day, and as part of Sunway University's ongoing Campus with a Conscience initiative, Sunway University and BookXcess have teamed up to turn the page on a meaningful new chapter of community engagement through a book donation initiative.

Following a special World Book Day edition of Sunway University's popular Comfy Chats series, which featured Andrew Yap, Co-Founder of BookXcess and Big Bad Wolf Ventures, a total of 120 books were donated to the children of Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah.

Professor Malissa Maria Mahmud, Dean of Sunway University School of Education said, "Initiatives like this demonstrate how education can extend beyond campus boundaries to make a tangible difference in the community. As a mission-driven, fifth-generation university, we remain committed to promoting lifelong learning and creating inclusive opportunities for all. By working closely with like-minded partners, we continue to champion initiatives that address real societal needs while nurturing a culture of empathy and service among our students and staff."



The initiative also included meaningful engagement around the importance of literacy and inclusive education, highlighting how access to reading materials can play a role in supporting emotional development, communication skills, and lifelong learning among children with diverse abilities.

"This collaboration reflects a shared vision between Sunway University and BookXcess to make reading more accessible and inclusive. At BookXcess, we have always believed in the power of books to change lives, shape perspectives, and connect people together. It is also part of our ongoing mission to empower communities through books and the knowledge that they provide, and we hope these books will spark curiosity, nurture imagination, and ultimately open up new possibilities for the children at the centre," Andrew Yap shared.

Expressing appreciation for the initiative, Mr M. Sityvikenndraa of Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah said, "We are truly grateful for the support from Sunway University's Campus with a Conscience initiative and BookXcess. Contributions like these not only provide our children with valuable learning resources, but also remind them that they are seen, supported, and included. It means a great deal to our centre and the children we care for."

More than a simple act of giving, the book donation initiative represents a shared commitment to building a more inclusive and compassionate society. It serves as a reminder that small actions can create lasting impact for the future generation.



Sunway International Schools (SIS) celebrates the exceptional achievement of Marc Chew, who completed his Cambridge IGCSE examinations with an outstanding result of 13 A* — all by the age of 12. Such a remarkable accomplishment places him well ahead of his peers, with Marc already progressing to college-level studies.

Having made history as one of the youngest known candidates in the November Cambridge IGCSE examination, Marc had earlier completed Physics, Mathematics, and Computer Science at just eight years old, attaining A* in all three subjects.

Principal of SIS, Mr Richard Cherry, said, "Marc's success, especially at such a young age, reflects not only academic excellence, but also commendable discipline, perseverance, and a genuine passion for learning. At SIS, we are committed to nurturing students to reach their fullest potential and we extend our heartiest congratulations to Marc on this milestone, achieved through the right support, mindset, and determination."

Now advancing to the Cambridge GCE Advanced-Level (A-Level) programme at Sunway College, the young prodigy is also active in debate and coding, with several notable achievements under his belt. These include placing second in The Debate World Competition 2024 and taking home the title of Grand Champion of Global Future Hack 7, where he created an AI-powered learning programme called QwikLearn.

Taking pride in his invention, Marc credits part of his academic success to the personalised software, which includes tools to manage and generate notes, assignments, and timetables that help students study smarter and more effectively.

"I am a firm believer in 'study hard, compete or work hard, play hard'. While I spend a lot of my free time coding, I also leverage on online study planners to manage my time, ensuring I stick to my personal timetable and dedicate two to three hours to revision after school," shared Marc, who skipped Years 4 and 5 at the ages of seven and eight respectively.

He added, "Though I was slightly surprised by my results, I was mostly happy because I knew how hard I had worked for this, and the sense of fulfilment made it all worthwhile. I'm truly grateful to SIS for the full academic scholarship, as well as my teachers who served as wonderful mentors, always ready to guide and share advice."

Acknowledging that Chemistry was one of the more challenging subjects for him, Marc encourages studying with peers and recommends being proactive — not only by offering help, but also by being open to receiving help from others.

He attributes much of his success to the people around him, namely his teachers and classmates who constantly pushed him to achieve greater and realise his full potential. He also added that his parents and siblings were truly thrilled and proud of his achievements.

Marc's achievement stands as a proud moment for SIS, reflecting the school's commitment to fostering a holistic learning environment where students pursue academic excellence while building character, confidence, and the mindset to grow into lifelong learners prepared for the future.





Have you ever watched a movie and realised the villain makes more sense than the hero? Or caught up on your favourite Netflix series and found the protagonist more unlikeable with each episode? In this article, Echo covers our top heroes and villains and shares our most hated ones.

Disclaimer: The content in this article is solely based on the writers' personal opinions.

Echo
MEDIA



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Tisyha

VILLAINS VS HEROES



YAY

HOWL PENDRAGON

Howl's Moving Castle,
2004

The first character to have the honour of receiving our very first yay rating would have to be Howl from *Howl's Moving Castle*.

This movie explores a magical world where a young girl, Sophie, lives. After a misunderstanding with a witch ages her, she stays with Howl and shares many experiences with him before they fall in love. Howl is exuberant, dramatic, yet kind and charismatic. Fans around the world adore him. He perfectly represents someone transitioning into adulthood, doing dumb things, falling in love, being vain and selfish, having emotional breakdowns, and occasionally making smart choices. He has not figured himself out yet. And he is a wizard. Who does not love a good wizard?

Howl's character strikes a perfect chord among audiences: he is just the right balance of mystery and pure-heartedness, such that his flaws turn into appeals.



YAY

THE T-800

The Terminator,
1984

The honour of receiving our second yay rating would have to be given to *The Terminator*, played by Arnold Schwarzenegger.

The Terminator is one of the most influential movies, and launched Arnold into international fame. He plays a cybernetic android sent from the future to kill a woman who will birth a rebel. The Terminator is a stone-cold killer with zero remorse, while Kyle Reese, a human from the future, tries to stop him. Arnold's near-perfect performance delivers one clear message: you can run, but you cannot hide.

Personally, one of the reasons why *The Terminator* feels so imposing is simply because of Arnold's influence. Beyond his imposing demeanour, Arnold is well-known for his wrestling days and roles as a hero. Seeing him as an indestructible machine of death against humans raises the stakes immensely. Anything can and will happen. Nowhere is safe from his cold, metal hands.



YAY

LADY EBOSHI

Princess Mononoke,
1997

The second Studio Ghibli character, Lady Eboshi, is a world apart from Howl. From her appearance to her role in the story, they have little in common. Yet she is magnificent in her own right, both as a nuanced character and a compelling villain.

Princess Mononoke explores a world of grey moralities, set in a busy corner of a vast, spiritual forest where gods roam as giant white wolves and enormous boars. The forest's original inhabitants face the advancing human civilisation, whose factories and homes steadily destroy nature and weaken its spirit life. The animals and spirits are intelligent, cunning, and determined to defend their homes, even if not united.

When Ashitaka arrives at Iron Town, it becomes clear that the humans' success is due to their ambitious leader, Lady Eboshi. Sharp and pragmatic, she ensures the town is both profitable and well-protected. She genuinely cares for her people and does not delight in the death of animals. The forest may suffer because of her actions, but she only wants the best for her people.

Lady Eboshi transforms the film's conflict from a simple 'Nature Good, Humans Bad' story into a nuanced meditation on humanity and violence. She is good-looking, well-spoken, capable of facing San. She is the whole package, strongly motivated, well-dressed, and great with a katana.



NAY

CHUN

Big Fish and Begonia,
2016

Moving on to the nay ratings, our first nominee is 'Chun' from *Big Fish & Begonia*.

A harmless non-human 'girl', Chun, experiences the human world as a red dolphin for a week. She encounters a human, Kun, who saves her from fishing nets but drowns. Chun bargains with the Soul Keeper, exchanging half her life to resurrect Kun in dolphin form, and takes him to her mystical realm. Her actions cause unprecedented disasters, putting her family and friends in danger.

Chun's selfishness and lack of remorse frustrated audiences, and online reviews were harsh. Despite the film's impressive visuals, her poor character development and personality made it hard to enjoy. At 1 hour and 45 minutes, it is not worth a rewatch.



NAY

MYNE

The Rising of the
Shield Hero,
2019

Our final nay rating goes to the infamous character Myne from *The Rising of the Shield Hero*, one of the most hated characters in the anime world. Myne perfectly embodies the idiom 'a wolf in sheep's clothing.' At first, she appears innocent, with emerald-green eyes and soft features, every man's ideal woman. But beauty can only hide a person's true nature for so long before it begins to show.

Betrayal is Myne's middle name. She falsely accuses the protagonist of sexual assault after he helps her, spread lies, and plays the victim to gain supporters. Even when confronted with solid evidence, she continues lying. The anime perfectly channels annoyance into a single character, and the creators deserve credit for evoking such strong anger.

If you want an anime that makes you feel something other than a good cry, this is it. But if you have high blood pressure and cannot tolerate more annoyance from this character, it is better to skip this show.

Overall, these are our personal ratings and opinions of characters we love and hate. Nothing here should be taken personally, as it is all in good fun. If you have not seen the movies mentioned, feel free to check them out. Whether to just watch and enjoy, or to just trash talk with friends, the world is your oyster.



Leading with Humanity and Purpose



Working with children with special needs is not just a responsibility, but a calling. Love, consistency, and dedication are at the heart of everything we do. Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah was founded by my father, Mr. S.K. Manikumar, who was physically disabled himself.

We have been running the centre for 32 years. I previously worked as a Senior Executive in a company, but I decided to step away to continue my father's legacy. Without a doubt, my father is my proudest inspiration.

I grew up surrounded by the children here and attended school with them, which explains my strong connection to them. My father, who had polio, used to volunteer at another centre, and that experience inspired him to establish Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah.

I have to say, it is not easy to run a home for children with special needs. You must first understand the children and learn to connect with them.

Although every day brings meaningful moments, one that stands out was a Jumbo Sale charity event we organised two years ago. It was held to raise funds for a child's surgery as well as to support our operational costs. I did not expect such a large turnout, but 10,000 people came forward to support our home.

Education is our top priority for the children here. We send our children to the Program Pendidikan Khas Integrasi (Special Education Integration Programme) to help them develop their skills and reach their full potential, ensuring they receive an education that meets their needs and abilities.

With Sunway University as our long-term partner, we are truly grateful for its Campus with a Conscience (CWAC) initiative in collaboration with BookXcess, through which we received 120 books that provide our children with inclusive and engaging reading materials to further support their learning and development. We have also previously hosted the Sunway Student Ambassadors for a reading initiative, creating meaningful opportunities for our children to engage and connect through storytelling.

To all Sunwayians who aspire to give back to the community, especially in supporting children with special needs, patience is essential. At times, the children may display challenging behaviours, but with patience and understanding, you can truly care for them.

Every small step a child takes is a milestone worth celebrating, and every smile reminds us why we do what we do. We hope to inspire others to see ability beyond disability and to help build a more inclusive and compassionate community.

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." — Mother Teresa

Mr M. Sityvickendraa

Pusat Penjagaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah



LITTLE BIG VOICES

This collaborative portrait of Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah, founder of Sunway Group and Sunway Education, was created by Sunway International Schools elementary students for an art exhibition titled Travel Over Time. Inspired by artist Chuck Close, the artwork is made up of 204 individual boxes, each coloured by a student to form a single unified image that represents teamwork, community, and collaboration, all are values strongly championed by Tan Sri Jeffrey Cheah.

A visionary entrepreneur and philanthropist, he has made significant contributions to education, healthcare, and sustainable development, including founding the Jeffrey Cheah Foundation to provide scholarships and access to quality education. This artwork honours his impact from the past to the present, and reflects his ongoing hope for a better, more inclusive future.



I am Dhruv Ashutosh Ganage, and I am from India. I am 21 years old and currently pursuing a degree in Bachelor of Science (Hons) in Industrial Statistics. When choosing a university, the most important thing I looked for was a lively campus. Studying on a campus where nothing happens feels boring to me, as I need to have something to do. There are many small and big events happening in and around Sunway campus, so I am never bored. I find that I am happier and study better when I have things to do.

My experience studying and living in Malaysia has been nothing short of amazing. The personal growth I have experienced while studying here is unbelievable. I have met wonderful people and embraced so many new experiences, from trying local foods to travelling. Visiting places like Malacca and Penang has been a highlight, especially seeing the wall paintings in Georgetown and the beaches.

The lecturers here are kind, patient and funny, which makes them incredibly approachable and easy to learn from. They take the time to explain concepts clearly. The student environment is also very warm and welcoming, with classmates who are supportive and friendly. Despite being an international student, I have never once felt left out or out of place, and I have always felt encouraged to participate and contribute in both academic and social settings.

Ms Sia Jye Ying has been incredibly supportive of me throughout my time here. I have had the pleasure of being in her classes



for two semesters, and her encouragement has been constant. Beyond academics, she has provided a great deal of guidance and help with my internship applications, even taking the time to assist with the paperwork and forms required for the process.

Sunway has supported and shaped my academic journey by fostering an environment that balances rigorous study with mental well-being. The lively campus culture has been essential. I truly believe that being in such an energetic setting has kept me motivated and productive throughout my three years here.

Having such easy access to reference materials has not only supported my coursework but also encouraged me to explore personal interests. For instance, despite my degree being in Industrial Statistics, I have used the library's resources to develop an interest in reading about aerodynamics. This contrast between my formal studies and my personal interests has really helped me stay mentally engaged and curious.

My biggest piece of advice to international students is to simply step out, explore and meet as many new people as possible. Being in a new country offers a unique opportunity to grow and learn, not only about yourself but also about the rich Malaysian culture. One of my favourite experiences has been talking with locals and other students to learn about our cultural differences. It is fascinating how something completely normal to me can be a new concept to someone else, and vice versa. Embracing these moments is what makes the international student experience truly rewarding.

SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

SUNWAY INTERNATIONAL



My name is Anna Jelena Amanquiton Cortez, a 21-year-old BSc (Hons) Psychology student from the Philippines. When I first started looking into studying psychology, I was looking for an experience that would challenge me and allow me to grow in a completely new environment. Studying abroad has always been something I hoped to do, so finding a university that offered both academic quality and an international perspective was important. Sunway University stood out early on, particularly because of its long-standing partnership with Lancaster University, which offered that global exposure while still being rooted in a vibrant and diverse campus.

The Honours pathway, with the opportunity to conduct an independent research project and gain internship experience, made the degree feel far more engaging and purposeful. There was a clear emphasis on not just understanding concepts, but also applying them in real world contexts.

Living and studying in Malaysia has been a crash course in independence for me. Academically, it pushed me to take full ownership of my learning. I learned how to manage my time, stay consistent without constant reminders and keep myself on track through deadlines. Over time, that shift has made me more disciplined and confident in how I approach my studies.

On a personal level, living away from home has taught me how to take care of myself. It is not just about big decisions, but also the small, everyday responsibilities like managing routines, budgeting and adjusting when things do not go as planned. I have also become more comfortable with uncertainty, whether it is dealing with new environments, unfamiliar situations or figuring things out on my own.

When I think of support, the Sunway International Student Ambassadors (SISA) comes to mind. I still remember being unsure at the beginning, but SISA was where I slowly found my people.



Some of the friends I made there are still the ones I am closest to now, and we have grown together throughout our time at Sunway. From starting out as a subcommittee member and now serving as Head of Admin, I have grown a lot in understanding what teamwork is.

My internship at the Sunway Psychology and Counselling Center, under Dr Erica and Ms Yogasri was my first real working experience. At first, it felt like stepping into a different level of professionalism, but over time, that nervousness turned into growth because of how patient and supportive they were. It gave me a deeper understanding of mental health, not just as a concept, but in how it appears in real people and real conversations.

My current internship as a research assistant under Dr Arjun has also been a valuable learning experience. It has helped me understand how ideas develop and how much reflection is needed before something is finalised. More than anything, it has made me appreciate research as something collaborative and evolving.

To future international students, my advice would be to stay open to new experiences and step outside your comfort zone, especially in the beginning. It can feel overwhelming at first, but that is also what makes the journey meaningful once you start to find your footing. Take the effort to meet new people and join clubs or societies. At the same time, be patient with yourself. It takes time for a place to feel like your own, but slowly, things will start to make sense, and you will realise just how much you have grown.



THREE BROTHERS, ONE LEGACY

For most families, receiving the Chancellors Scholarship is a proud milestone. For the Loh family, the scholarship became a meaningful achievement shared by three brothers, Joel, Joash, and Jayden. Education was always valued in the Loh household, but not in the conventional sense of chasing perfect grades. Instead, their parents nurtured a love for learning from a young age, emphasising curiosity, discipline, and the importance of giving their best in everything they pursued. This strong foundation shaped each brother's journey and set the stage for their shared success.



The eldest, Joel (BSc (Hons) Information Systems (Business Analytics), 2020), began his journey to becoming a Chancellors Scholar after searching for scholarship opportunities. Following the submission of his application and a series of interviews, he received the life-changing news that he had been awarded the Chancellors Scholarship. He later went on to graduate as valedictorian. To him, the scholarship represented both privilege and responsibility, as he sought to embody Sunway's values and serve as a role model to others.

For Joash (BSc (Hons) Psychology, 2023), the middle brother, becoming a Chancellors Scholar was a carefully-planned goal. After encountering setbacks during his college years, he became determined to reduce the financial burden on his parents. With this motivation, he planned his academic and co-curricular activities strategically to strengthen his scholarship application. Receiving the Chancellors Scholarship marked the achievement of a long-awaited goal and opened the door to a fulfilling university experience.

The youngest, Jayden (BSc (Hons) Psychology, 2025), performed well academically in his foundation studies and his parents encouraged him to apply for the scholarship. Receiving the scholarship was a turning point that helped him grow and mature. While being a scholar, he faced moments of difficulty, but he remained thankful, as it allowed him to better understand himself and respond to challenges.



Being Chancellors Scholars opened doors to opportunities that went far beyond financial support. They were able to embrace

diverse leadership opportunities. Joel served as President of the Sunway Social Innovators Club and General Secretary of the Sunway University Student Council. Joash became the representative for his Psychology cohort, acting as a bridge between students and the School of Psychology management. Meanwhile, Jayden took on the Extracurricular Director role within the Sunway University Student Council.

The brothers were given the opportunity to broaden their horizons through the Sunway Cultural Exchange team, embarking on a transformative visit to Lancaster University. They immersed themselves in new cultures, developed a more global outlook, and forged friendships with students from diverse backgrounds. This exposure offered valuable insights into different ways of thinking, cultural nuances, and approaches to life. The experience helped them step out of their comfort zones, become more independent, adapt to unfamiliar environments, and develop a stronger sense of personal responsibility.

Joel is now a Senior Product Manager at HealthMetrics. He credits Sunway for instilling three key values that continue to guide him today: becoming an independent learner, embracing collaboration with people from diverse backgrounds, and practising self-discipline.

Joash is currently part of the Unilever Future Leaders Programme in the Human Resources department. His university experience prepared him for his role by giving him exposure to how large organisations operate, from communicating with senior leaders to pitching ideas. Jayden chose to further his studies at East China Normal University to strengthen his proficiency in Hanyu. He reflects that his time at Sunway cultivated cultural flexibility and provided him with a strong foundation to adapt and excel in a new academic environment.

As a word of advice to future scholars, Joel emphasised the importance of finding a group of friends who can challenge you to be better, bolder, and braver, as they will carry you far in your academic journey. Joash believes in making the most of your time as a Chancellors Scholar, recognising that the role opens doors to opportunities that can elevate both your university experience and personal growth. Jayden, on the other hand, encourages scholars to value the experiences and skills gained from encounters with such a wide network.



The Chancellors Scholarship is offered in honour of Tan Sri Dato' Seri Sir Jeffrey Cheah KBE AO, Chancellor of Sunway University, and the Right Honourable Alan Milburn, Chancellor of Lancaster University, UK. As one of the many scholarships offered by Sunway University, it commemorates the strong partnership between Sunway and Lancaster University across a range of programmes and disciplines. This year also marks the 20th anniversary of the partnership between Sunway and Lancaster University.

For more information on scholarships and how to apply, please visit <https://scholarship.sunway.edu.my/>



Hi Sunwayians 🌟 This edition of Sunway Stars features Farha Fatima Yar Khan from India, hailing from a family of nobles of the erstwhile princely state of Hyderabad. At 44, she is a postgraduate student and mother of two children, who also graduated from Sunway University. Currently pursuing her Master of Education at Sunway University, Farha has journeyed from physiotherapy to full-time motherhood and now back into academia, proving that growth has no age limit. Let us explore her life, inspirations, and the experiences that shape her journey.



You first came to Malaysia to support your children's education. What inspired you to begin your own academic journey at Sunway University?

Our move to Malaysia was a conscious choice to give my children a modern, holistic education. As a hands-on mother, I noticed gaps in the traditional approach, focusing on certificates rather than nurturing curiosity and deep thinking.

To contribute to society, I had to build on my practical experience. Inspired by my late father's resilience, who upskilled in technology at 72, I embraced this challenge. I was sceptical at first, but my husband and children were very supportive of me. The Education Malaysia Global Services (EMGS) and the International Office team at Sunway also helped with my visa application. My father's advice—"Fortune favours the bold"—keeps me going, and looking back, goals I once thought unreachable were just waiting for the right season to bloom.

How has your experience at Sunway University, particularly its emphasis on lifelong learning, shaped your sense of purpose, both personally and academically?

My experience at Sunway University has been both unique and rewarding. I've received invaluable guidance from Dr. Astri Yulia, Miss Agnes, Dr. Hassan, Dr. Fadzillah, Dr. Conie, Dr. Ditto, and Professor Malissa, Dean of the School of Education. Sunway's state-of-the-art facilities and resources have greatly supported my progress. From AI forums to international conferences, I'm not just learning but also networking, growing as an empowered educator, and embracing lifelong learning with the responsibility to share knowledge for the benefit of future generations.



In what ways have your children and family supported or influenced your decision to pursue Master of Education?

My family has been the pillar of strength behind my decision. While my husband ignited the spark to pursue my passion in education, it took my entire family to turn a long-held dream into reality. With my son as my tech-support expert and my daughter as my strategist, this pivot from healthcare to education has become a full-on family mission. The children who once learned their first letters with me are now my tutors, guiding me in new technologies and helping me turn "what if" into a confident "I can." Alongside my brothers and friends, who have always been my biggest cheerleaders, they take pride in everything I'm achieving today.

Both your children have graduated from Sunway University, and now you are about to do the same. What does it mean to you to share this milestone as a family?



Sharing the Sunway University stage with my children feels like a full-circle moment. Our study room has become a brainstorming hub, swapping assignment tips and enjoying a bit of healthy academic competition. There's a beautiful irony in sitting in the same lecture halls they once occupied, proving that learning can be embraced at any age, even while juggling motherhood. By simply 'walking the talk,' I can model lifelong learning, and this shared journey has bridged the generational gap, turning typical teen friction into a deep, scholarly friendship.

How has pursuing a Master of Education later in life reinforced your belief in women's ability to pursue their ambitions at any stage?

After twenty years of curating a home and nurturing my children's character, health, and intellect, I am now embracing the long-held passion of my own academic journey. Pursuing a Master of Education, I honour my mother's belief that an educated, self-reliant woman with strong morals and social values can be a good mother, wife, and a competent individual. Seeing the pride in my family's eyes as I rediscover my 'forgotten' potential reminds me that motherhood doesn't end a woman's story, it enriches it. And this enrichment, I believe, is meant to be shared.

I would like to adapt Dr Seuss timeless quote from his book, *Oh, the Places You'll Go!* as it inspires me to do what I can:

"Today is my Day! I am off to Great Places!
I have brains in my head,
I have feet in my shoes,
I can steer myself any direction I choose.
I am on my own, and I know what I know,
And I am the one who'll decide where to go
My mountain was waiting,
so I'll get on my way!"





The Weight of The Sole



By:
Nazia Binti Mohamad Azam,
Foundation in Arts,
Sunway University
Foundation

The first to be carried,
first to be celebrated,
first to name the givers,
and first to fit the standards.

The more it grows, the more it starts to question,
Expectations to be fulfilled, with no leads to begin with.
It's first disease to be cured, without even taking the vaccine.
It's building the poles, with no solid foundation.

The first to fall,
but never first to be caught.
Taught to tie its own wounds,
with strings it found alone.

When another arrived,
celebration seems familiar.
The hands that once hovered,
now hang elsewhere.

It became the guidance,
without ever being taught directions.
It built a house in daylight,
expected to glow in the storms.
How did it even learn to stand,
without ever being shown how to kneel.

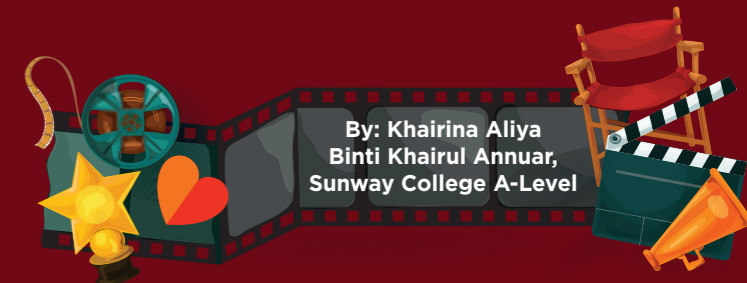
It learned by failing,
built by breaking,
and it still stood,
since it thinks it could.

And now it knows,
the weight of the sole
it has always stood,
since no one else would.

-The Sole



Roll the Credits, I Learned Something



By: **Khairina Aliya
Binti Khairul Annuar,**
Sunway College A-Level

I got scammed more than once—just enough times to scold myself for not knowing better. You would think experience makes things easier to spot, but it never feels that way in the moment. Sometimes it is the excitement of finding something at a price too good to ignore, other times it is the relief of finally selling something that matters to you—yes I managed to (almost) lose from both ends. It was stressful, and admittedly embarrassing, but like most things, the feeling passed. It was stressful and embarrassing, but like most things, the feeling passed. What stayed was the quiet understanding that something had been learnt, whether I intended it or not.

That seems to be how learning works. It does not wait for the right moment or arrive in ways that feel important at the time. More often than not, it attaches itself to ordinary routines, small habits, and the ways we choose to get through the day. For me, a lot of that understanding came from the spaces in between. Long breaks on campus, familiar sights, and the quiet process of figuring things out without really knowing that I was.

At the same time, growing older brings a different kind of awareness that is harder to ignore. The idea from *Spider-Man* that “with great power comes great responsibility” used to feel like fiction, but it gradually becomes more personal. Responsibility is not always defined by big decisions; more often, it exists in small, repeated ones. It shows up in academic pressure, in planning for what comes next, and in quieter expectations at home. Balancing all of this is not always straightforward, but it reinforces something important: responsibility is not something you suddenly have, but something you grow into without realising it.

A lot of that growth also comes from the people you encounter along the way: some you instantly understand, some you keep at a distance, and others who challenge the way you think entirely. Not every connection becomes meaningful in the traditional sense, but each one leaves something behind. Whether it is a perspective, a habit, or simply a better understanding of what you value, there is always something to take from it.



There was a period when most of my days looked the same. I would sit at the second-floor west end study deck and stay there for hours, watching something on my laptop just to pass time. If I saw someone I knew, I would wave as if everything was normal and then return to what I was doing. It was not something that stood out from the outside, but it was quiet and isolating in a way that was difficult to explain.

It was during one of those long hours that I found myself returning to *The Lego Batman Movie*. It had always been something light and entertaining, the kind of film you watch without expecting it to stay with you. But somewhere along the way, that changed. What once felt exaggerated started to feel familiar: the insistence on independence, the reluctance to rely on others, and the quiet realisation that distance is not as easy as it seems. I did not watch it differently on purpose, but I understood it differently, and in that shift, it reflected something I was still learning, that being alone and being okay with being alone are not always the same thing.

At some point, I also realised that part of the difficulty came from the expectations I had formed in the first place. The films of John Hughes, particularly *The Breakfast Club* and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, present a version of growing up that feels complete and intentional. Everything seems to lead somewhere; moments carry weight, and by the end, there is a sense of understanding, even if it is not perfect. For a long time, I thought my own experience would feel like that — clear, defined, and somewhat cinematic.

Whether it is through books, conversations, or the constant stream of perspectives encountered online, there is a process of observing, questioning, and forming individual understanding. Learning is not always intentional, and it is rarely immediate. It depends as much on where your mind is as it does on what you are experiencing, which means that almost anything, if you pay attention, can become a lesson.

Looking back, it becomes clear that I did not learn everything I expected to. Not every experience felt significant in that moment, and not every part of it matched what I thought it would be. But that does not mean there was nothing to take from it. If anything, it highlights something simpler: that learning does not depend on whether a moment feels important, but on whether you recognise it when it happens. And moving forward, those lessons can be the most valuable thing to hold.



GALLERY OF GRAPHICS



"Stay safe for me, okay?"

This piece features my original character, Elijah, and his kind roommate, R. The scene takes place just before they both head off to war.



This is a fan art piece of Lilia Vanrouge from the mobile game Twisted Wonderland, depicted in his pop music club outfit. I imagine him as a somewhat "grandpa-like" character, which is why I included the phone as a playful detail.



Clarissa Law Xin Ru

Foundation in Arts,
Sunway University
Foundation Programme



A Life in Upcycling

By: Maslisa Zainuddin,
Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Arts and
Social Sciences, Sunway University



There was a time when I felt that making a real difference in the world required something big; policy changes, large scale initiatives, or sweeping global movements, the kind of impact that makes headlines. But over time, I began to realise that change does not always arrive in grand gestures. Sometimes, it begins quietly, in the choices we make every day, with our own hands.

For me, that choice has taken the form of upcycling.

My journey began more than two decades ago, at a time when thrifting was still very much a dirty little word, long before it became "sexy" to be environmentally conscious. I was drawn to thrift stores and op shops while living and travelling overseas. The textures, the forgotten garments and objects, the sense that each piece had lived a life before. I began collecting, experimenting, cutting things apart and putting them back together again, long before I had the language to call it "upcycling".



Somewhere along the way, I realised I had become a proud "junkie". What others saw as junk, I saw as possibility. That shift in perspective became the foundation of everything I do today, including my PhD.

I taught myself how to sew along the way, beginning with a second-hand sewing machine, while reliving moments of watching my mother sew. There were no formal lessons, just curiosity and a willingness to make mistakes and laugh at myself. To this day, I continue pretending to know how to sew, and that has always been enough for me. The stitches may not always be perfect, but the intention and the story behind each piece carry weight beyond technical precision.

I also repurpose old glassware, pottery, and everyday objects, giving them new functions and renewed presence as functional art. These objects, like textiles, carry traces of their previous lives, and working with them becomes another way of honouring what already exist.

There is something deeply grounding about working this way. The tactile sensation of handling materials, cutting, stitching, and assembling slows you down. You begin to notice textures, patterns, the way materials age, and the way they hold memory. And perhaps, this is where shift happens; because upcycling is not just about making something new out of something old. It is about seeing differently.

I often share these thoughts with my students when I teach Sustainable Design. We talk about systems, environmental impact, and the scale of the challenges we face. But we also talk about agency. Because the truth is, not everyone can influence policy or drive large scale change. And that can feel discouraging.

But we can all do something.

I walk the corridors of Sunway University wearing my refashioned wardrobe, pieces that are a little quirky, sometimes unexpected, but always one of a kind. People notice. Colleagues ask questions. Students get curious. Family, friends, and even strangers stop to comment, wherever I am in the world.

"Where did you get that?"

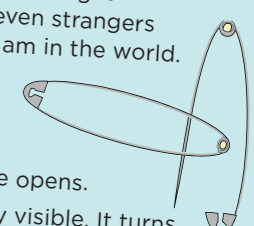
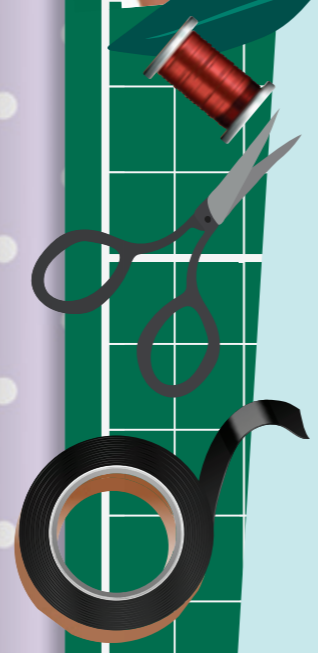
"You made this?"

"What was it before?"

And just like that, the dialogue opens.

Upcycling makes sustainability visible. It turns an abstract idea into something tangible. It reminds us that creativity has a role to play in how we respond to environmental challenges, and that solutions do not always have to be complex. And while an object may not change the world, it can change a mindset.

So, I continue to stitch, refashion, and repurpose. Not because it will solve everything, but because it is something I can do. And in a world that often feels overwhelming, that feels like a meaningful place to begin.





Sustainable Taste of Home: Nasi Goreng Uwan

By Chef Nur Fadillah Saidin
Lecturer, School of Hospitality and Tourism Management, Sunway University



Some of my earliest memories are from my grandmother's kitchen. That was where I first learned that nothing should go to waste, not food, not time, not effort. I would sit beside her, quietly shredding leftover fried fish, carefully separating the flesh from the bones.

What I remember most is the smell. The moment belacan hit the hot pan, mixed with chilli, it filled the kitchen instantly with a strong and comforting aroma. Then came the leftover rice, stirred through the sambal until every grain was coated. The fish I had prepared would go back into the pan, no longer leftovers, but something entirely new. It was a simple dish, made from what we already had, but it never felt lacking. It was the kind of food that stayed with you, not because it was elaborate, but because it felt like home.

In many ways, these small kitchen moments reflect what Sustainable Gastronomy Day, celebrated annually on June 18, encourages us to think about how we can create meaningful dishes without wasting ingredients. Using leftover rice and repurposed fried fish to create something comforting shows that sustainability begins with simple, mindful choices.

Even now, whenever I cook this belacan fried rice, I am transported to that moment, sitting beside my *Uwan* (what I call my grandmother), learning simply by watching and doing.

That experience shaped how I see food today. My grandmother never followed recipes, but she lived by her own quiet rules in the kitchen. Through her, I came to realise that cooking is not just about feeding people, but about holding on to meaning and memory.



Sambal Belacan

- | | | |
|----|---------------------|---|
| 10 | red chillies | Using a mortar and pestle, pound all the ingredients into a smooth paste. Alternatively, you may blend using an electric blender. |
| 2 | bird's eye chillies | |
| 2 | shallots | |
| 4g | belacan, toasted | |
| 1 | lime, juiced | |



Fried Turmeric Fish

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|--|
| 1g | salt | Rub salt on the mackerel and lightly coat with turmeric powder. In a pot, heat up oil over medium high heat. Shallow fry the mackerel until golden brown and crispy. Remove from oil and drain with kitchen towel. Remove the flesh from the bone and break into smaller pieces. |
| 5g | turmeric powder | |
| 1 | Indian mackerel | |
| Oil for frying | | |



Fried Rice

- | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------------|--|
| 15ml | infused oil | In a frying pan or wok, heat up infused oil over medium heat. Stir fry the garlic and sambal belacan until fragrant. Add in cooked rice and continue to stir until the rice is evenly coated with the sambal belacan. Add in fried turmeric fish flesh and adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper to your preference. |
| 2 | cloves garlic, chopped | |
| 45g | sambal belacan | |
| 50g | rice, cooked (preferred overnight) | |
| 80g | fried turmeric fish | |
| Salt & pepper | | |



Serve

- | | | |
|---|----------------------------|--|
| ½ | cabbage, shredded | Serve the sambal belacan fried rice with shredded cabbage, carrot, red onion on the side, and garnish with spring onion. |
| ½ | carrot, shredded | |
| ½ | red onion, sliced | |
| 1 | stalk spring onion, sliced | |

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