

09/03/2003

Three years' jail for RM234 theft

Ramlan Said

A FORMER stable hand found out the hard way that crime does not pay when he was sentenced to three years' jail for stealing six pairs of jeans worth RM234.

Ismail Aman, 57, was caught shoplifting at the Sogo shopping complex last Jan 6. In mitigation, he told magistrate Syafeera Mohd Said that he was divorced and an asthmatic.

He also had to care for a 61-year-old sister, Utusan Malaysia reported yesterday.

Berita Harian reported that the Ampang police, with the co-operation of Tenaga Nasional Bhd, disconnected electricity supply to nine illegal video arcade parlours.

The outlets, although raided several times before, had continued their operations.

Ampang police chief Assistant Commissioner Azmi Hashim said the police had previously seized 50 video machines. They were surprised to find 32 new machines in the outlets during the recent raid.

Berita Harian also reported that the Entrepreneur Development Ministry had proposed to the Government that unemployed graduates wishing to start a business be given a 100 per cent loan.

Quoting Deputy Minister Datuk Khalid Yunus, the newspaper said the ministry decided on the move as it wanted to encourage graduates to make business a career.

Currently, these graduates are given a 90 per cent loan, but due to difficulties in coming up with the remainder of the capital, not many were able to start their business.

On the political front, Utusan Malaysia reported that Kelantan Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Aziz Nik Mat has admitted to not having any proof when accusing the Federal Government of blocking investors from going to the State.

Nik Aziz said his accusation was based on complaints from businessmen who claimed they were prevented from investing in Kelantan.

Berita Harian yesterday carried a report on amendments to the Land Code to classify wanton land-clearing and destruction of highlands as criminal acts.

Minister in the Prime Minister Datuk Rais Yatim said if the amendments were approved, those responsible in approving projects and the developers involved in indiscriminate land-clearing risk being jailed and fined.

He said the amendments would resolve the question of authority on land matters.

"Once it is classified as a criminal act, automatically it falls under the Federal Government jurisdiction. Wanton clearing of the highlands can be considered as destroying our heritage.

"It is no longer about land only but the interest of the people and future generation."

On the just-concluded 13th Non-Aligned Movement Summit, Utusan Malaysia revealed that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had spent three weeks writing his inaugural speech.

According to the paper, sources said the draft text was amended six times.

The final draft was ready for printing only last Saturday.