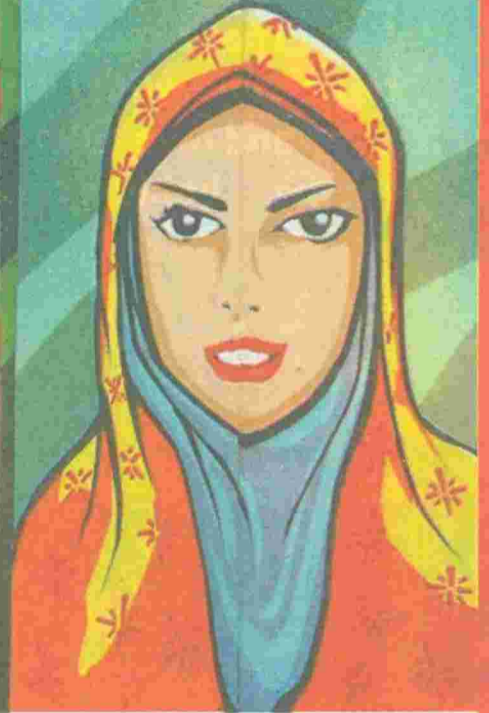
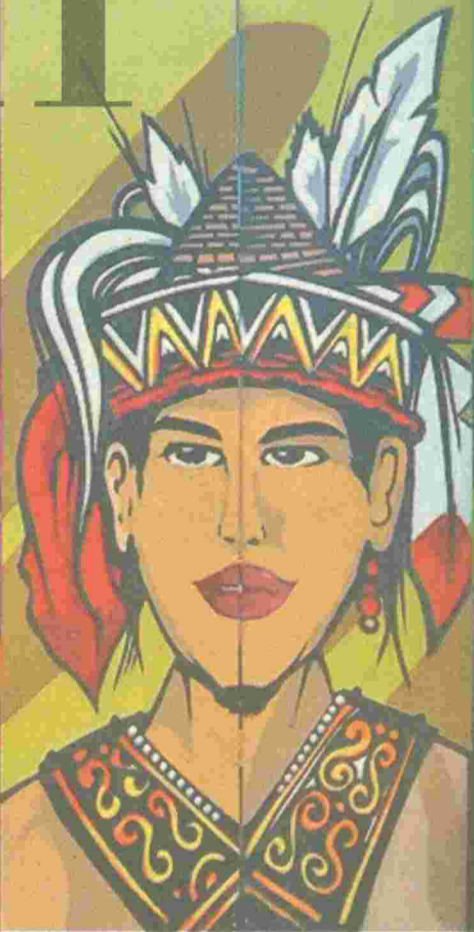


LIFE &
TIMES

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

PLUSH



United colours of Malaysia

A GRAFFITI ARTIST CAPTURES OUR RICH DIVERSITY
→ PAGES 8&9

PEOPLE PAGES 2&3

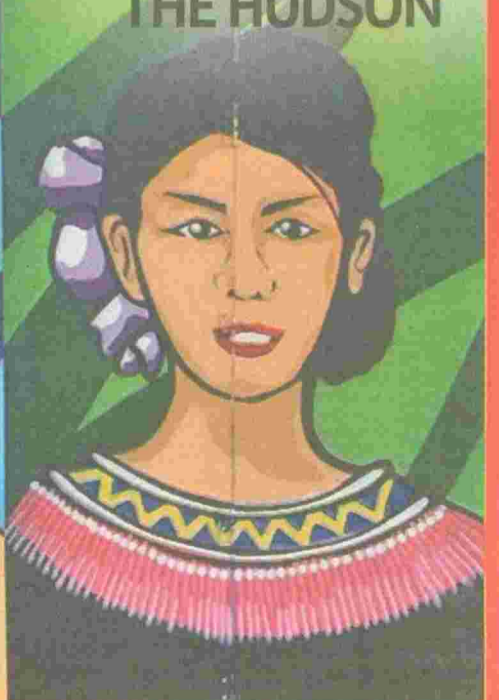
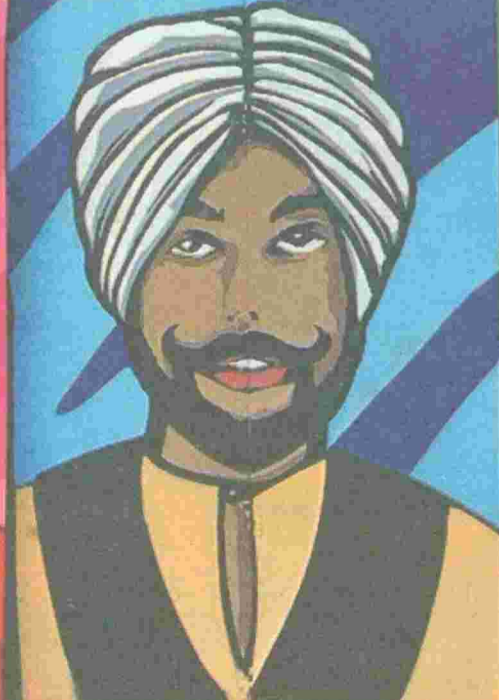
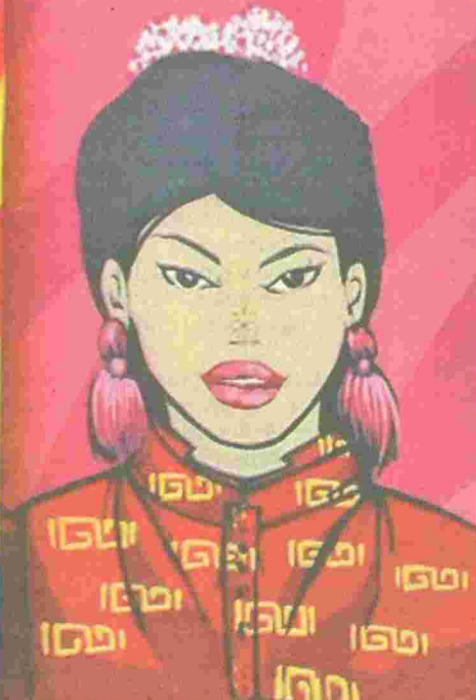
CHEF'S SWEET
SUCCESS

HERITAGE PAGES 6&7

TALE BEHIND
THE TILES

REEL PAGE 13

MIRACLE ON
THE HUDSON



BROUGHT TO YOU
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PLUSH art

ONE morning, a man walks out of his front door to pick up the newspaper. As he turns to walk back inside, he's shocked beyond belief. Someone has created "artwork" on his walls in the middle of the night.

Scratching his head, he wonders what to do next. He is not aware that some distance away, the "artist" is watching him.

"That is what I used to do," confides Mohd Nazri Amran. "I will come back the next day to see if they liked my graffiti or not."

A prolific artist and regarded as a pioneer in the Malaysian graffiti art scene, he is one of eight artists selected to be part of an art project called Celebrating 125 Years, commemorating oil and gas company Shell's 125th anniversary in Malaysia.

The eight artists have offered 15 murals at selected Shell stations nationwide, with at least one mural located in each state.

REBELLION

An only child, Nazri speaks in clipped tones, uneasy about sharing stories about his childhood and youth. Based in Risdia in Batu Pahat, Johor, Nazri grew up in his foster father's home. By the time he was 17 he was ripe for rebellion.

With a Javanese heritage that speaks of determination and fortitude in the face of adversity, Nazri ran away from home and made his way to Kuala Lumpur. He did complete a course in civil engineering in Sekolah Teknik, but, doesn't want to dwell on that part of his life. Instead, he's keen to share that even while he was in Batu Pahat, he was already involved in graffiti art. In fact, that's the reason he had to leave in the middle of the night because the police had come to his foster father's house to question him on suspicion of vandalism.

In his first years in Kuala Lumpur, Nazri hung out around Bukit Bintang. He recalls: "I slept anywhere. Janji boleh mandi [as long as I can have a bath], I stayed there." In time, Nazri became enthralled with the hip hop community and learnt even more about the world of graffiti and graffiti artists.

The word "graffiti", Nazri explains patiently, comes from the Italian word "graffere" which means "scratch on a



Nazri's son, Adam Noah standing in front of the painting his father created.

surface". It can be any surface but it's more common to see graffiti on a wall. The art created can be permanent or not and the materials used can include spray paint, pencil and charcoal.

He insists that there is a difference between graffiti and painting a mural. He explains: "With graffiti, we use spray paints. With murals, it's a paint brush. Brush strokes slow you down. With a spray can, you can go fast but it's harder to control the pressure of a spray can."

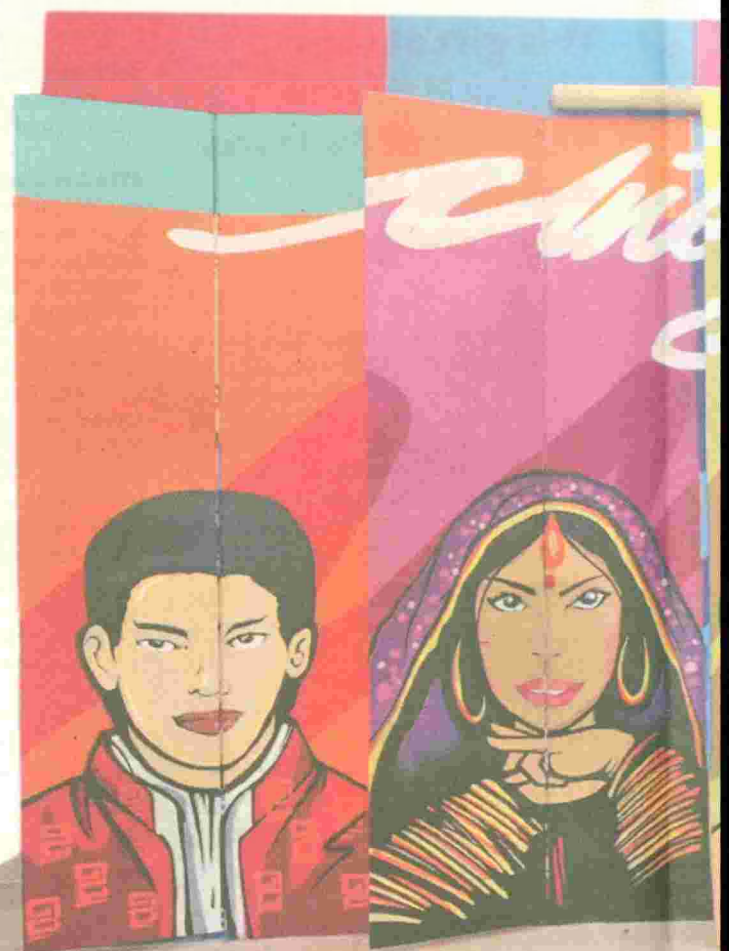
NAME TAG

The name Nazri uses when creating graffiti is D'mojo. "This is a 'graffiti tag,'" he explains and says that it's the name around which all his graffiti is created.

Actually, D'mojo was not always the name he used. Initially it was Phobia. When he decided it was time to change, his original choice was 'Death Mojo'. Confessing that, perhaps, his fortunes have since changed since he first started writing graffiti and that he has a more positive outlook on

GRAFFITI THAT SPEAKS

A graffiti artist depicts his celebration of c



AT PROUDLY UNITY

ur nation, writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**



Unity, a graffiti piece by Nazri Amran

WHERE ADZ Enterprise, Shell Jelutong Expressway, Sungai Petani, Kedah

WHEN August 2016 to August 2017

Panel of Unity by D'mojo.

life now, he shortened it to D'mojo.

Other than his name, Nazri's repertoire of paintings includes other images. One of the first ones ties in with his fishing hobby. "I like to study their features," he says, "especially the sisik (scales) and the structure of the bones." His works of a Barracuda and Peacock Bass in Kampung Pandan and Setiawangsa respectively are testament to that.

The second is more personal in nature. When his son, Noah Adam, was born, Nazri painted a picture of the baby to mark this happy occasion. The wall he chose is part of the building from which he runs his business on Jalan Imbi. The business is called District Shop and Gallery and Nazri sells art supplies, especially for graffiti and mural artists.

PIONEERS AND UNITY

For the Celebrating 125 Years project, Nazri's offering is called Unity and is aimed at capturing his interpretation of progress and the pioneering spirit of Malaysians. He painted eight panels, each one depicting people from each of the main races. He chose Unity as Malaysia is home to a diverse range of people. In spite of our differences, Malaysians have co-existed and prospered due to shared interests and common causes such as unity, respect and tolerance.

It was a challenge, though, when the time came to instal these colourful panels. There wasn't enough space to erect all the panels. So what did they do? The panels are installed in such a way that they are displayed on a loop, four at a time. This installation will be exhibited until August 2017.

Although Malaysians are more open to seeing artwork on their walls now, Nazri admits that there remains a fine line between what is acceptable as street art and what is considered vandalism and a crime. That said, the lure of creating graffiti is still strong, seeing that he's worked on close to 1,000 wall in the last 15 years.

In the end, he's not one to worry about the time when he has no more walls to paint or when he would get physically exhausted. In fact, he's quite prepared to confine himself to painting on canvas.

Bringing our chat to a close, he concludes: "Asalkan can paint, cukup. (As long as I can paint, that's enough)."



Painting of a Barracuda on a wall in Kg Pandan.

PICTURES BY KHAIRUL AZHAR AHMAD

