



Looking into the blue sky: FAS Udara Flying Club flight operating officer Gosigan Ravindran (back, row left), air crew Ahmad Nasrullah Ilyas (back row right) president Capt. H.S. Dharan (front, left), and Capt R. Sri Ganapathi.

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Photos by **P. NATHAN**

THE only way to enjoy an elevated view around the Klang Valley without all the traffic and chaos is to fly!
On board the Cessna 152, a small two-seater, single-engine plane, one would be able to feel a sense of higher calmness while flying in the familiar skies of Kuala Lumpur.

The experience can be gained via the introductory flying lesson by the FAS Udara Flying Club at the Sultan Abdul Aziz Shah Airport in Subang, Selangor.

FAS Udara Flying Club had its humble beginnings in 2003. President Capt H.S. Dharan, who has more than 20 years of experience in the aviation industry supplying parts, believes flying can be for everyone.

Dharan started by buying an aircraft but had no licence, so he also learned how to fly in 2004.

In order to establish the club, he went ahead to get approval from the Department of Civil Aviation. Dharan further promoted the flying interest to others with the support of the club's first patron, former prime minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who himself is a big supporter of sports aviation.

At present, there are about 120 members with three aircraft — Cessna 150, Cessna 152 and Cessna 172Q — all ready for flying enthusiasts.

"In 2007, we obtained the approval for the club to be recognised as a non-governmental organisation by the Registrar of Society.

"Flying is something that gives people freedom because a person would be able to take the plane to their desired destination away from road traffic, making it a unique and affordable hobby.

"We offer the private pilot licence (PPL), whereby the students will be able to fly 5,700kg and below aircraft which include King Air Beechcraft Twin Engine after the course.

"We have lawyers, radio deejays and expatriates who take advantage of this experience especially by the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) to get some of the best views of what Malaysia has to offer.

"There is certainly an interest in recreational flying these days.

"From what I see, being able to have a PPL is an achievement by itself," he said, adding that the niche market may not cater for everybody.

FAS Udara has members who would go to Ipoh or Penang and even Pulau Pangkor for a quick getaway, saving time and money. A member can charter a plane for about RM560, subjected to fuel charges.

"When people get their PPL, they would first take their family to show them they can fly.

Bird's eye view

Flying Club offers the public a chance to take to the skies



Landmark flight: The Cessna 152 flying across the Petronas Twin Towers in Kuala Lumpur.

Some charter the plane for a short trip around Port Klang or Pulau Indah.

"To obtain the PPL, the students would have to sit for both ground and flight examinations. Besides those who like to have their licence to fly, we also meet a lot of people who like to experience a preliminary flight to have a better outlook of what the course offers.

"This flight introductory and familiarisation programme offers a 30-minute flight and a briefing on safety features. This allows a person to experience first-hand if flying is something they can and would like to pursue at an affordable cost of RM399.

"When you have people buying luxurious cars in the city, a used two-seater aircraft would only cost between RM200,000 and RM250,000.

"So having a licence will give a person free-

dom to navigate his travelling experience at much cheaper cost," he said.

He added it was more common in the United States, where a lot of people had a PPL and would fly on their own to get around from point to point or just for a getaway.

FAS Udara Flying Club offers a breathtaking experience to those who are daring, adventurous and willing to fulfil their burning desire to fly.

For details, log on to www.fasclub.com or call 03-7846 4186.



Up in the air: The Cessna 152 passing by the KL Tower.



Bird's eye view: One would be able to enjoy scenic view never before seen of the Klang Valley.



Jam-free journey: Many flying enthusiast love the Visual Flight Rules (VFR) to get some of the best view of city.