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A close look at river-cleaning efforts



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The community leaders being briefed on the water treatment process at the Sungai Sering River Water Treatment Plant in Ulu Yam, Ampang.

COMMUNITY leaders who live along the Sungai Kelang catchment in the Ampang area have come out strongly in support of the Government's efforts to rehabilitate rivers in Kuala Lumpur.

A site visit and water quality sampling exercise was held recently to showcase the progress made under the River of Life (ROL) campaign, which is spearheaded by the Federal Territories Ministry, Kuala Lumpur City Hall, Drainage and Irrigation Department, and Pemandu.

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The engagement was joined by almost 30 residents from areas along the river, comprising Taman Melawati, Wangsa Melawati, Taman Warisan, Sierra Ukay, Lembah Klang AU2 and Lembah Klang AU3.

During the visit, participants were briefed by Global Environment Centre's River Care Programme coordinator Dr K. Kalithasan on the importance and impact of river cleaning.

They also took part in a hands-on sampling exercise to determine the quality of the water along the river.

Participants of the ROL Public Outreach Programme (ROL-POP) found the initiative a highly beneficial one.

They expressed their commitment to convey to their respective communities the importance of keeping our rivers clean to ensure a positive future impact on the ecosystem.



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Participants taking part in the water quality test.

Taman Warisan resident Mazlan Jamaluddin said, "Our rivers are the lifeblood of Kuala Lumpur and as a long-time resident of the city, the River of Life project is timely and necessary.

"As Kuala Lumpur residents, we should all play our part and work together to keep our rivers clean.

"The Government, via its various agencies, has invested a lot, but this initiative also requires the support of the residents, especially those living along the river, to ensure that rubbish is not thrown into the river."

Another ROL-POP participant, Mohamed Helmie chimed in, "As an active member of my school's Nature Society and having lived within the vicinity for many years, I recognise that the river is a vital resource for the communities living here.

"I believe Sungai Kelang holds much potential as a recreational hub and sightseeing spot.

"The key in pursuing this is to first maintain healthy water quality in our rivers, hence the sampling exercise really opened my eyes to this," said the student who lives in AU2.

One of the sites visited during the exercise was the Sungai Sering River Water Treatment Plant in Ukay Perdana, Ampang, which plays a significant role in river cleaning.



Mohamed Helmie checking out the results of one of the water quality tests.

The water treatment plant utilises biotechnology, which uses microorganisms and aeration system, whereby an inlet gate, monitored by a sensor to ensure water levels remain at optimum levels, regulates the inflow of river water into the plant.

Solar aerators in the plant increase oxygen saturation in the water, followed by sludge removal. Once the process is complete, cleaner water is released back into the river through the outlet.

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Prior to visiting the Sungai Sering Plant, the public were given a demonstration on how to perform water quality tests under the guidance of environmental experts.

This was done in order to equip them with the necessary knowledge to carry out river water sampling and impart this skill to their respective communities.

The River of Life project comprises three pillars, namely river cleaning, river beautification and land development. Its vision is to revitalise Sungai Kelang and Sungai Gombak and turn them into vibrant and liveable waterfronts with high economic value.

Under the project, the economic viability of zones along the two rivers will be improved, connecting communities within the surrounding area.

Existing public spaces along the riverfront will be transformed into an exciting region with river-based activities, alongside Kuala Lumpur's other attractions, to reinforce the public message on the importance of rivers.

The river beautification and land development plan will include noteworthy landmarks, such as Dataran Merdeka, Bangunan Sultan Abdul Samad and Masjid

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Jamek, spreading across 11 precincts and extending along the MRT lines to open up new areas with high pedestrian volume and ample amenities.

The River of Life has been identified as an Entry Point Project in the Greater Kuala Lumpur National Key Economic Area, one of the key components in Malaysia's economic transformation objectives.