



MAJLIS PERBANDARAN AMPANG JAYA
BAHAGIAN PERHUBUNGAN AWAM DAN SEKRETARIAT
MENARA MPAJ, JALAN PANDAN UTAMA,
PANDAN INDAH, SELANGOR,
55100 KUALA LUMPUR

KERATAN AKHBAR
2 MAC 2020 (ISNIN)

AKHBAR

MUKA SURAT

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Iam (centre) being assisted by a volunteer during a plogging session at Bukit Kiara park. — Photos: ART CHEN and AZLINA ABDULLAH/The Star



SS7 Kelana Jaya residents say areas close to restaurants are filled with rubbish such as plastic wrappers.

Saving the planet while staying fit

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Volunteers keep Bukit Kiara park and SS7 Kelana Jaya clean through plogging

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NO MATTER how big or small, every effort that goes towards preserving the environment counts.

As society progresses, more individuals become aware of the part they can play in keeping the environment clean.

Some of them have formed groups and taken up plogging. Plogging is an activity which combines jogging or walking briskly and picking up litter.

The aim is to collect rubbish such as plastic to prevent it from polluting the environment and affecting wildlife.

The activity, which started in Sweden about four years ago, is gaining popularity in other parts of the world.

A group of volunteers are doing their part to keep Bukit Kiara park in Kuala Lumpur clean through plogging.

Team leader Koo Wee Hon said he started plogging with his wife Ise Reifinger in early 2019.

The couple got their environmentally-conscious friends to join them.

In recent months, they have also invited the visually impaired community to participate.

Armed with a store-bought plogging tool comprising a long stick with a clip at one end, they look out for rubbish while walking and jogging in the park.

Some have made their own version using natural materials such as bamboo while others wear gloves to protect their hands as they pick up litter.

Inclusive activity

The visually impaired wear a bib made of recycled cloth with the words "Visually Impaired Persons' Environmental Guardian" proudly emblazoned.

They include Michael Tam, 73, and Eddy Chong, 54, both of whom are visually impaired.

The duo take the MKT to the Taman Tun Dr Ismail Station where they are picked up and



SS7 Kelana Jaya residents have incorporated plogging into their daily routine.

Tam said he and most of his visually impaired peers love the outdoors.

However, they lack opportunities to participate in outdoor activities such as going for a walk in the park with the sighted.

"I love the fact that we get to exercise while cleaning up the environment through plogging.

"We are thrilled to be included in this activity with the able-bodied because we lack such opportunities.

"We always welcome events and activities that include us.

"This park has a well-paved walking trail and with the help of the sighted, we have a great time together while doing good.

"The environment matters to everyone and we are glad to do our share," added Tam.

Chong shared Tam's sentiments about loving the outdoors and is looking forward to more plogging opportunities.

Chong said being outdoors had helped him cope with depression when he became blind after

activities such as plogging as it enables him to socialise.

Koo said he and his wife had been recycling items for decades but realised that recycling alone could not curb climate change.

"We need a shift in people's mindset if we want to see changes with greater impact. We hope our plogging at Bukit Kiara will inspire others to follow suit.

"We want more people to do this in as many places as possible.

"Volunteers get to keep fit while picking up rubbish. Our hope is for more people to start plogging at any park or public space."

He said among the rubbish collected were empty alcohol bottles and cans, plastic bottles, plastic food wrappers and cigarette butts.

The rubbish gathered is then sorted and sent for recycling or thrown into the bin.

Daily routine

In Kelana Jaya, residents were introduced to this activity by area councillor Rahibah Che Omar last



Koo hopes to inspire others to pick up plogging.

Every day, some 20 residents from the SS7 Kelana Jaya community go for a walk in their neighbourhood and have incorporated plogging into their routine.

"During our Earth Day celebration, about 70 residents, from teens to those in their 70s, participated in the activity.

"They had not heard of the word plogging nor had they seen anyone doing it before," she said.

"Through plogging, the residents also get to survey the types of rubbish discarded in the open. They are also more aware of their surroundings.

"They inform the rubbish collection supervisors if they spot any

advantage in helping to bring the community together," added Rahibah.

Plogging session coordinator Hussin Othman said his wife recently suffered from a heart attack and was advised by the doctor to go for a walk.

"Plogging has now become a routine and my wife and I do it together in the mornings," he said.

Rahibah said most of the rubbish was located near parked vehicles in the neighbourhood.

"Many discard rubbish from their cars. Areas close to restaurants are also filled with rubbish such as plastic wrappers," said Rahibah, adding that this was the feedback