



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

KERATAN AKHBAR
24 JULAI 2017 (ISNIN)

AKHBAR

MUKA SURAT

The Star

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An app to pay for parking

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E-payment gains traction
The trend of paying for parking through an app is becoming increasingly popular in Selangor with several local authorities on board so far. >2&3

Just a click away: Technological advancement is now allowing motorists in selected areas to pay for their parking via a mobile app. — NORAFIFI EHSAN/The Star

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Banners informing motorists of the MPAJ parking app when it was first introduced before FlexiParking took over. — filepic

An app to pay for parking

More local councils set to adopt digital payment method

By **BRENDA CH'NG** and **KATHLEEN MICHAEL**
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FINDING a public parking space in commercial areas can drive most people up the wall but the problem does not end with finding a spot.

You then have to make payment, which is often an issue because of factors such as faulty parking machines, the lack of coupon agents, and even the weather.

To address this, some local councils in Selangor decided to go digital by introducing an additional payment mechanism – a mobile app – that makes paying for

parking a breeze without having to look for coupon agents or parking machines.

Among them are the Sepang Municipal Council (MPSepang), Shah Alam City Council, Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) and the Kuala Langat District Council (MDKI).

The first three councils are using the FlexiParking mobile app. Sepang Municipal Council (MPSepang) introduced the mobile app in August last year, followed by Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) in January this year.

Ampang Jaya Municipal Council (MPAJ) was the latest to introduce

FlexiParking after its app developer took over its initial app called MPAJ Parking this month.

How it began

The FlexiParking app was developed by Leading Innovative Technologies and Systems Sdn Bhd (LITS) in collaboration with Suasana Efektif (M) Sdn Bhd.

LITS chief executive officer Lai Thiam Sin said the app was in line with Selangor's Smart City vision.

At first, however, it was not easy to convince local councils to come on board.

"Initially, when we presented the

idea, most of them were concerned about how well it would be received by the public.

"We tried our best to tailor the app for the convenience of both enforcement officers and motorists," Lai said.

It took the company about a year to develop the app and they worked closely with the local councils to educate enforcement officers on how it works.

LITS are currently in talks with the Selangor Municipal Council (MPS) and if all goes according to plan, the app will be launched there by the end of this month.

"More councils are receptive





(From left) Zainuddin, Lai, Suasa Efektif operations director Abdul Rahman Mohd Yatim and corporate, sales and marketing director Tengku Datuk Taha Alfashni showing off the FlexiParking application that is now available to motorists in Shah Alam, Ampang Jaya and Sepang.

Benefits of the app

Motorist	Enforcement/Local Council
Can register up to six vehicles	Officers can be tracked by the council via GPS
Payments can be made anywhere for up to six different vehicles at any one time	Number of summonses issued by every officer is recorded in the app
App will not let you overpay after the daily cut-off time	Number of compounds previously issued for every motorist is updated in the app
App will not register incomplete vehicle registration numbers to prevent errors	Keying in the vehicle registration number will show how long parking is paid for
Users can start paying from 6am to avoid the hassle when rushing for their 8am meeting	No duplicate summonses can be issued as the app registers when the most recent ticket was issued
Payments made at 6am will only take effect from 8am	Less dispute between officers and motorists due to the black-and-white timestamps in the app
Downloading FlexiParking alone is enough to pay for parking in MBSA and MP5epang areas	App acts as data collection on where and when most motorists park
Input for location or street name is not necessary if unknown	App can be a form of KPI system
Users will be notified 10 minutes before the end of the parking duration	The app will only be used if no parking ticket or coupon is displayed
Credits can be transferred to and from different accounts via the transfer button in the app	If parking fee is paid while the summons is being issued, the officer will get a pop-up message to not issue the summons
Topping up of credit is RM1 for each transaction either for a RM10 or RM50 top up	Just by keying in the street name, a list of vehicles that had paid for parking will pop up

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after seeing its implementation in MBSA," Lai said.

He noted that in Sepang, initially the number of users was low as many wanted to utilise their existing parking coupons while some did not know about the app's existence.

"Usually, new users would start with a minimum RM10 but after they have experienced the convenience of the app, they are more convinced," he said.

Based on LITS' data, almost 80% of users across all three local councils were aged 40 and below.

A user is allowed to store up to six vehicles in the app and will be notified 10 minutes before the period paid for is about to expire.

To date, the app has 14,601 users and has garnered a 4.2 star rating on the Google Play Store.

By using the app, users are also saving the environment. As of July, a total of 4,405kg of paper has been saved in Shah Alam (2,832kg), Ampang Jaya (466kg) and Sepang (1,107kg).

This is measured by taking into account the weight of a parking coupon, 3gm, multiplied by the number of bays and hours used.

To create more awareness on the app, Suasa Efektif chief executive officer Zainuddin Othman said banners were placed in commercial areas and information on the app was printed at the back of parking coupons.

"We are waiting for approval to put up the banners at bank counters and display boards," he said.

Expanding coverage

LITS is hoping to get more local councils on board including Petaling Jaya City Council (MBPJ), Subang Jaya Municipal Council (MPSJ) and Klang Municipal Council (MPK).

"We would love to work with the Selangor government to streamline the parking payment system in the state.

"If all the local councils are on board, this could be done more easily," said Lai, adding that they also planned to introduce the system to Ipoh, Kuantan and Melaka.

Petaling Jaya mayor Datuk Mohd Azizi Mohd Zain said MBPJ was looking at digital options to pay for parking.

"We want to go green and also be a smart city, so paying through mobile app is part of our plans," he said.

Earlier this year, MBPJ terminated the services of parking concessionaire Godell Parking Sdn Bhd



Enforcement officers from councils that have adopted the FlexiParking app now only need a smartphone to check if motorists have paid for parking.



Multiple parking coupons displayed on the dashboard of a vehicle in Ampang. Motorists can now pay for their parking via the app. — Filepic

and it is in the process of rolling out a new parking coupon system first.

"We will never completely eliminate the coupon system as not all motorists will be open to using an app," said Mohd Azizi.

Motorist Soraya Ahmad is a convert to the new way of paying for parking.

"I like the fact that I can key in many car registration numbers and help family members pay for their parking.

"I have done this for my mother," said Soraya who downloaded the app early March to use within Shah Alam.

She said the app's GPS system needed improvement to identify the right road a vehicle is parked on.

"Often I can't locate the street name and sometimes the road

signs are blocked by *ah long* stickers," she said.

Taman Sri Muda, Shah Alam resident T. Mogan was happy that the top-up fee did not expire.

"I used to buy scratch coupons and when we couldn't finish them by the expiry date, they would have to be thrown away," he said, adding that he still preferred using parking coupons than the app.

"Not everyone has a smartphone or an Internet data on-the-go. So the older generation would definitely stick to parking coupons," he said.

Klang resident Yang Yong Seng, who used the app to pay for parking in Shah Alam, hoped it would be introduced in more areas.

"Paying through the app is definitely more convenient than searching for coins or buying coupons," he said.

Evolution of the parking system

- Since mid-1999, the state's public parking system has been fully privatised by two companies which were awarded the contract to manage the parking system via the pay-and-display method.
- Both companies, Suasa Efektif (M) Sdn Bhd and Godell Parking Sdn Bhd, signed the contract ranging between 20 and 25 years.
- Suasa Efektif was tasked to manage seven local councils—Selayang, Klang, Shah Alam, Ampang Jaya, Sepang, Kajang and Kuala Selangor.
- Godell covered Petaling Jaya, Subang Jaya, Sabak Bernam, Kuala Langat and Hulu Selangor.
- However, over the years, there has been complaints from motorists about poorly maintained parking machines which were always faulty and the hassle they had to go through to find one that worked.

- Klang Municipal Council (MPK) was one of the first to terminate its parking concessionaire back in 2012 followed by the Petaling Jaya City Council this year.
- The rest are still using the pay-and-display method combined with several other systems such as the coupon and mobile app.
- MPK is the sole council that used only the coupons with all parking machines removed from the streets.
- Other local councils that also used the coupon system now are Shah Alam, Selayang and Ampang.
- In Subang Jaya, the coupon system introduced in January 2015 will be discontinued after all the printed coupons are sold out due to the poor response.
- Petaling Jaya will roll out its parking coupon system soon.



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KOSMO ISNIN 24 JULAI 2017

SELAGIN halwan, Zoo Negara juga mempunyai pelbagai spesies tumbuhan termasuk herba yang ditamam bagi tujuan pendidikan dan biasan.

LATIHAN amali memberi peluang kepada pelajar untuk mempraktikkan teori yang telah dipelajari di dalam kuliah.

SEBAGAIAN pelajar kursus FHR3601 melakukan kerja-kerja mencantas pokok di Zoo Negara, Kuala Lumpur baru-baru ini.

Pelajar UPM timba ilmu selenggara taman di Zoo Negara

RENTAK kampus

TUGAS menyelenggara taman bukanlah suatu yang mudah. Seperti juga kerjaya yang lain, tugas tersebut memerlukan individu yang terlatih memiliki kepakaran yang berkaitan. Sebagai persediaan menjejaki alam pekerjaan selepas menamatkan pengajian nanti, seramai 34 pelajar tahun dua program Jazah Sarjana Muda Sains Taman Dan Rekreasi dari Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) telah melakukan latihan amali bagi memahirkan diri dengan tugas berkenaan.

Latihan tersebut yang diadakan di Taman Herba Zoo Negara, Kuala Lumpur baru-baru ini melibatkan latihan mempraktikkan teori yang telah dipelajari di dalam kuliah menerusi kursus FHR3601 iaitu Operasi dan Penyelenggaraan Taman seperti kerja-kerja merumput, mengembar tanah, mencantas dahan dan ranting serta membersihkan kawasan taman.

Penyeras program, Dr. Nor Akmar Abdul Aziz berkata, latihan amali itu dilaksanakan bagi memberi peluang kepada para pelajarannya untuk menggunakan peralatan selain merasai pengalaman melakukan tugas penyelenggaraan taman dengan betul.

"Saya sika memberikan pengalaman sebenar kepada pelajar agar mereka dapat lihat dan merasai sendiri suasana sebenar yang mereka akan hadapi apabila bekerja kelak.

"Amali sebegini akan membunkan mereka tahu bagaimana hendak mengurus pekerja dan kawasan taman," katanya.

Beliau yang juga pensyarah di Jabatan Rekreasi dan Ekokelengkapan, Falsafah Perhutanan dan Rekreasi UPM berkata, kursus itu menekankan mengeni teori berkaitan pengurusan rumput, teknik pemangkasan, penggunaan bahan kimia, tanggapan peralatan dan liabiliti orang awam selain pengurusan habsyugaw awam.

Justeru katanya, latihan amali yang dijalankan di Zoo Negara itu sangat penting bagi membolehkan para pelajarannya mempraktikkan segala teori yang telah dipelajari di dalam kuliah dengan melakukan sendiri tugas-tugas penyelenggaraan di taman.

Dalam pada itu, Ketua Bahagian Pendidikan Zoo Negara, Junaidi Omar berkata, pihaknya sangat mengali-ahukan kehadiran kumpulan pelajar terbabit bagi lujuan pembelajaran selain mengutip pengalaman menjadi petugas penyelenggaraan taman.

"Apabila melakukan sendiri tugas-tugas tersebut, mereka akan memperoleh pengalaman yang boleh digunakan pada masa akhir datang.

"Walaupun asasnya adalah sama, tetapi setiap taman mempunyai pokok dan landskap yang berbeza. Oleh itu, kerja-kerja penyelenggaraanya juga mungkin sedikit berbeza antara satu taman dengan taman yang lain.

"Sebab itulah, teori dan pengalaman sangat penting bagi memastikan kerja-kerja tersebut berjalan dengan lancar," katanya.

Dalam latihan amali yang berjalan selama hampir tiga jam itu, para pelajar juga didedahkan kepada kepelbagaian spesies tumbuhan herba yang ditamam di sekitar zoo berkenaan dengan bantuan Ketua Jabatan Taman Dan Landskap Negara, Muhammad Ismail.

Sementara itu, seorang pelajar, Lee Yee Shian, 22, berkata, dia sangat gembira apabila diberi peluang melakukan latihan amali di Zoo Negara sekali gus melakukan kerja-kerja kesukarelawan dengan membantu petugas zoo menyelenggara taman di situ.

"Pengalaman sebagai sukarelawan melalui latihan amali ini sangat bagus kerana saya dapat melibatkan diri untuk mengendalikan serta melakukan penyelenggaraan dengan cara yang betul.

"Saya berharap agar diberi lebih banyak peluang seperti ini pada masa hadapan bagi membolehkan saya dan pelajar lain menimba ilmu di lapangan sebenar," katanya.

NOR AKMAR