

River-berating with a clean message

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Participants having fun in the 'River Quest' race during the river carnival.

IN CONJUNCTION with World Rivers Day, the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) and Global Environment Centre (GEC) held the "Mini River Carnival" at Masjid Jamek, Kuala Lumpur.

The event, which attracted more than 200 city folk, was organised as part of a wider effort to raise public awareness of the Klang River under the River of Life (RoL) project and also to celebrate World Rivers Day.

DID river basin management division senior principal assistant director Wan Marhafidz Shah Wan Mohd Omar said the event was a success in terms of creating public awareness.

"We hope the public's participation and involvement will help others to preserve it.

"Rather than treating the river as their backyard drainage, they should treat it as an asset.

"The aim is to transform the Klang River to be an iconic river in Kuala Lumpur.

"This is a massive effort that should involve many agencies as well as the public.

"People should be aware that plastic materials will take hundreds of years to biodegrade and what it would be if we keep producing it while existing plastic materials have yet to biodegrade," added Marhafidz.

Event organiser and GEC river care coordinator Dr Kalithasan Kailasam said the event was a fun learning activity to expose to people the importance of the river not only as part of recreation but also as an essential part of our potable water supply.

Among the carnival attractions were "River Quest", a race which required participants to explore the Klang and Gombak River by completing tasks and answering questions to proceed to the next checkpoint.

"We also had the 'Young River Scientist' programme for the children and it's about the importance of rivers and mini-experiments to measure good and bad river water," added Kalithasan.

The carnival also saw the launching of "Friends of Klang River Basin" – a community of networks within the Klang River basin that are committed towards the conservation of the river's basin and its river banks.

The community is also actively involved in river monitoring and the adoption of Klang River and its tributaries.

The carnival was also a zero-waste event to enlighten participants on the need to reduce waste and adopt a zero-waste lifestyle.

Participants were seen bringing their own bags, container and cutlery to collect food and drinks.

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