



**Team effort:** Lim (second right) convincing everyone else that the water quality at the upper reaches of Klang River is of high quality. On his right is Faizal and at extreme right is Pemandu's director for Greater KL transformation Datuk Ahmad Suhaili Idrus.

# Caring for Klang River

## Students learn to measure water quality and look for pollutants

By **MENG YEW CHOONG**  
metro@thestar.com.my

**M**ORE than 100 students and teachers from schools in Kuala Lumpur got their hands dirty for a good cause recently.

They were taking part in a comprehensive training session, held over two days, to teach them about river conservation.

The group from SK Klang Gate, SMK Wangsa Melawati and SMK Lembah Keramat had one common bond — they were all from the upper Klang River basin, an area of immense importance when it comes to ensuring river cleanliness.

Those who completed the programme will be called River Rangers or Smart (Start Mananging All Resources Today) Rangers.

The train the trainers module is part of the River of Life (RoL) Public Outreach Programme. The RoL is an entry-point project under the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley National Key Economic Area and the Economic Transformation Programme.

RoL aims to transform the Klang River into a vibrant and livable waterfront with high economic value. Essentially, it is about cleaning up the dirty river to enhance its appeal to city dwellers.

The public outreach component of RoL is organised by the River Basin and Coastal Zone Management Division of the Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID), in collaboration with the Global Environment Centre (GEC) and ERE Consult Sdn Bhd, a Malaysia-based environmental consultancy.

GEC is a Malaysian environmental NGO specialising in community-



**Looking at water quality:** Students measuring the sample of water from the river against a scientific chart (inset).

based natural resource management, and it developed the River Ranger and Smart Ranger programmes that will eventually be extended to another nine schools in the upper Klang River basin — SK Taman Melawati, SK Taman Melawati 2, SMK Taman Melawati, SJK (T) Taman Melawati, SK Wangsa Melawati, SK Wangsa Jaya, SK Taman Permata, SK Taman Keramat 1 and SK Taman Keramat 2.

The River Ranger programme teaches students how to properly assign an address to a particular stretch of river, produce a river report card, perform water quality testing, bio-monitoring, pollution mapping, as well as familiarising themselves with concepts such as zero waste management and composting.

DID River Basin Division director Datuk Lim Chow Hock said the first phase of the public outreach programme aims to reduce pollution and improve water quality in the Klang River by improving attitudes and changing the mindset of people living within the project area.

"The future of the Klang River lies in the hands of the younger genera-



tion. If we want the river to be better than it is today, it is imperative that we teach our children to love and care for the river. If everyone takes care of the river or drain flowing near their home, from the upper reaches all the way down to the sea, the Klang River will become a beautiful asset we can all be proud of," Lim said.

GEC director Faizal Parishaid: "Caring for the river and the environment is a habit best learned from a young age. This is the key reason we are working together with schools to inculcate a culture of love and care for the environment."

To add more appeal to the outreach programme, a photo contest centred around the RoL was also launched last month, and the closing date is July 31.

For details, visit [www.myrol.my/index.cfm?menuid=131](http://www.myrol.my/index.cfm?menuid=131)