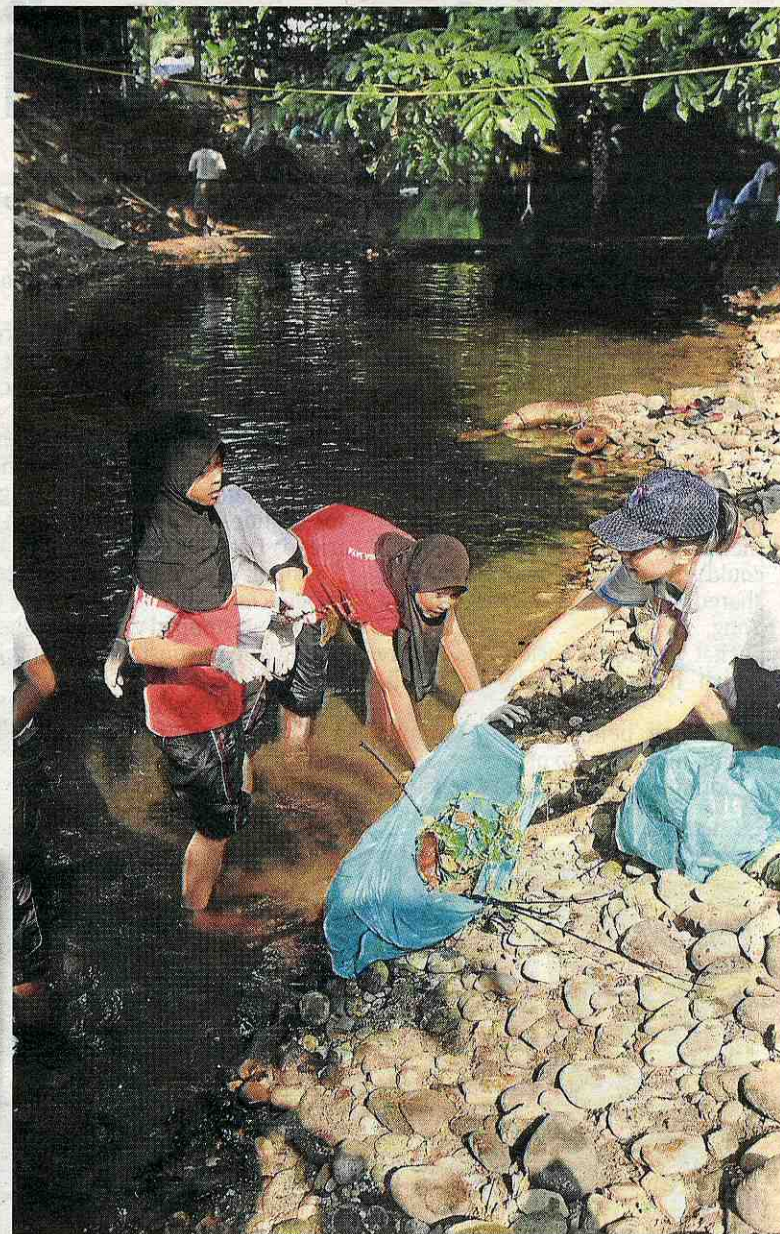




Speeding up water flow: The volunteers removing excess vegetation in the stream.



Team effort: A teacher and her students working hand-in-hand to clean up the stream near the Klang Gates dam.

Rekindling a love for our rivers

300 volunteers join forces to clean up Klang River at its source

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

THREE hundred volunteers recently sweated it out to clean a source of the Klang River, located just below the Klang Gates dam.

The clean-up was organised by the Irrigation and Drainage Department (IDD), Global Environment Centre (GEC), Ampang Jaya Municipal Council, Lanskap Malaysia, Yayasan Modal Insan Harta, GAB Foundation and the Selangor Environment Department.

The volunteers comprised civil servants, private sector employees, university and secondary school students, as well as residents of Taman Warisan, a village located

near the stream.

The volunteers removed more than 20 bags of rubbish and a huge amount of riverine vegetation that slows down the flow of water.

The clean-up was also aimed at improving the environment of the newly-established River of Life Public Outreach Programme (ROL-POP) open classroom at the Klang Gate Recreation Park.

ROL-POP is a joint undertaking between ERE Consult Sdn Bhd and GEC, which is supported by the Performance Management and Delivery Unit (Pemandu) and implemented by DID.

The project aims to instil a sense of ownership of Klang River among developers, restaurateurs, industries, students, local communities and the



Claim of ownership: A total of 30 existing trees around the open classroom area are tagged.

general public.

According to GEC, excess vegetation in the stream had to be cleared as these slowed down the flow of water drastically. The vegetation was composted on site and not sent to faraway landfills.

The team also tagged 30 trees

around the open classroom area and planted 100 trees ranging from *bruas* (*Garcinia hombroniana*) and *balau pasir* (*Shorea materialis*) to *kayu arang* (*Diospyros pilosanthera*), *sekiat* (*Aglaia korthalsii*) and *mata pelanduk* (*Ardisia elliptica*).

The volunteers then took part in a river walk where they learned about water quality auditing, bio-monitoring and the characteristics of natural rivers.

GEC's River Care programme coordinator Dr K. Kalithasan said the

activity site was on its way to becoming an open classroom area for river education in the Klang Valley.

"It is hoped that activities like this will help rekindle our relationship with nature, especially rivers which have always been essential for water and transportation.

"It will also encourage the public to help care for Klang River if they are aware that the water in its upper reaches is still categorised as Class I, the best quality," he said.