



SMK Raja Perempuan School Ipoh students being briefed on how water is treated at the biological treatment plant before being discharged into Sungai Kinta. — Photos: SAIFUL BAHRI/The Star

Students clean up Sungai Kinta

135 school girls take part in efforts to rehabilitate section of river near park

PERAK

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ABOUT 135 SMK Raja Perempuan Ipoh students took part in an effort to help clean up Sungai Kinta.

Working together with Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI) and Kinta Riverfront Hotel and Suites, the students, comprising Form One, Two and Four girls, produced 400 mud balls using the Effective Microorganism (EM) technology.

The mud balls were made from red earth, EM treated rice-rinsed water and fermented organic matter. Once rolled together and thrown into the water, the mud balls, containing healthy enzymes and fungus, are said to break down harmful bacteria and improve river water.

Before the mud ball production workshop took place, the students were taught the importance of conserving rivers by UPSI lecturer Dr Husni Ibrahim.

School principal Juahir Mohd Hassan said the school undertakes an environmental project like this every year.

"Last year, we worked on a composting project. This year, we met with UPSI to form a partnership, and they gave us the

idea to work on ways to clean rivers.

"We wanted to hold the project at a well-known area, so we picked Sungai Kinta because it is the main river flowing in the city," she said during the project held at the Sungai Kinta Riverfront area near D.R. Seenivasagam Park on Sunday.

Juahir hoped the river water would be cleaner after their project, allowing aquatic life in the river to grow.

Among the participating students was Form Four student Mok Shue Yee, who said she had fun during the project which started at 7am despite hazy conditions.

"I was a bit worried at first, but after wearing a mask, it was not so bad in the end.

"We learned so much today, especially on how we should always take care of our rivers and not simply throw rubbish in them.

"I hope our mud balls will help the river," she said.

Shue Yee's classmate, R. Lavaniya, 16, said the project taught her the importance of creating environmental awareness.

"One person's irresponsible act could affect us all, just like the current haze that's happening in the country.

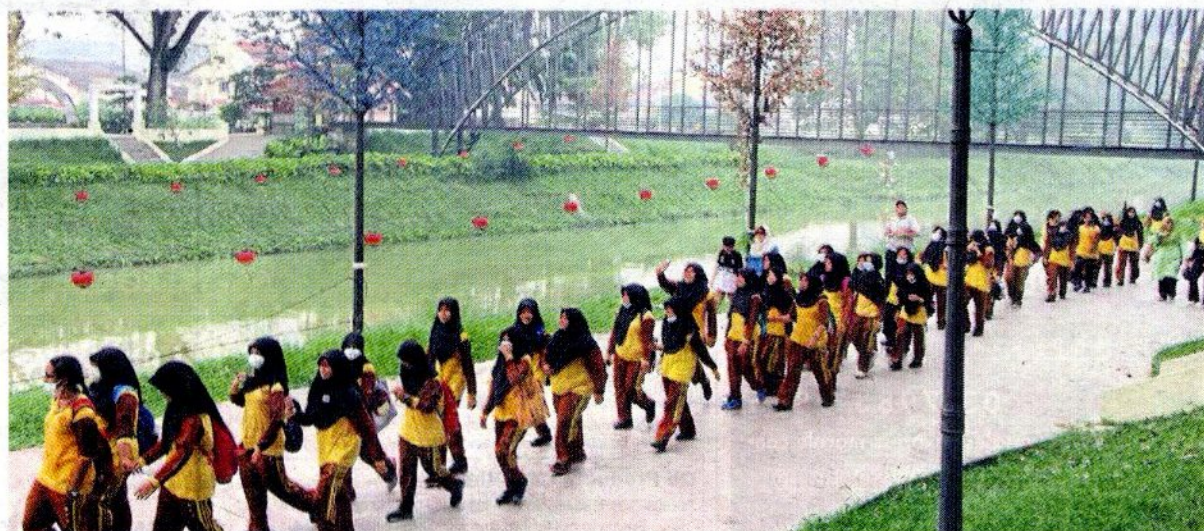
"Although what we did today with mud balls is just a small act, I hope we can help make a difference in cleaning the river," she said.



The students throwing mud balls into the river.



The mud balls, containing healthy enzymes and fungus, are said to break down harmful bacteria and improve river water.



The students walking along the Sungai Kinta riverbank during the Ecological Thinking 2015 Save Our River programme.