

NEWS CLIPPING

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Protecting our resources

> GAB Foundation's River Carnival drives conservation of our water ways

MORE than 3,000 people enjoyed a fun-filled day at GAB Foundation's River Carnival at Zoo Negara which saw them participating in various activities aimed at galvanising the public to protect and conserve Malaysia's water resource: the rivers.

To date, more than 50% of the rivers in Malaysia are categorised as polluted with more under risk as the country's economic development, population and urbanisation intensifies.

Considering that 97% of Malaysia's drinking water supply comes from rivers and streams, the need to protect the rivers is increasingly urgent. "Once the river is polluted, we can only restore. We can never return it to its original pristine condition.

That is why it is better to protect the rivers than to clean it up.

Bear in mind that it is also very costly to restore any river," said chairman of GAB Foundation, Tan Sri Saw Huat Lye.

"We can all play a role. Research shows that 40% of water is wasted at home especially in the showers and toilets.

Be more conscious of your water consumption. Be mindful of what you are pouring down the kitchen sink as it goes to the river. If we can take care of these essentials, nature will take care of the rivers," added Dr K. Kalithasan, River Care Programme

coordinator, Global Environment Centre (GEC), the NGO partner of GAB Foundation in its river rehabilitation efforts.

To instil the civic conscious mindset, the River Carnival's activities were centred round providing the visitors with useful tips and

nuggets of information about the rivers and water conservation.

The main draws of the day were the River Hunt and the Young River Scientist Programme.

The River Hunt required teams to solve puzzles and complete river, water and biodiversity related tasks while the Young River Scientist Programme allowed more than 600 children to play scientist for a day.

Through these activities, the participants learnt about rivers, river organisms, and how to test the water quality of rivers.

At the same time, younger children were entertained through Storytime with GABBY, an interactive story telling programme which educates them on the water life-cycle and the importance of conserving water and our rivers.

Participants also enjoyed other activities such as face painting, caricature drawings, upcycling art and craft workshops and a specially produced River Musical throughout the day.

This is GAB Foundation's third and largest River Carnival to-date. Since 2007, the

Foundation with GEC have been at the forefront of river rehabilitation and conservation through the Foundation's W.A.T.E.R Project.

Under the GAB Foundation's W.A.T.E.R Project, the Sungei Way river was successfully

rehabilitated, its water quality improved from a Class IV - V, signifying that the water is extremely polluted to a Class III, where the water is suitable for life.

The project also successfully enhanced the river's biodiversity.



(Top) The River Carnival was officiated by the Deputy Secretary General 1, Ministry of NRE (back row, 5th from left)

(Left) A child getting himself a river-themed body art at the River Carnival.