



New skills: Basri makes ecobricks out of recycled bottles stuffed with fabric and paper scraps. He has also learnt how to assemble laser-cut parts into book stands and clocks.
— GRACE CHEN/The Star

Keeping their chin up

The prospect of having to leave the safety of a transit shelter in Kuala Lumpur looms large for three rescued homeless men. *StarMetro* revisits them in the second part of this special series

By GRACE CHEN and FARID WAHAB
metro@thestar.com.my

SPACIOUS, breezy, orderly and peaceful.

This best describes the atmosphere at Anjung Kelana, a transformation centre in Taman Danau Desa, Kuala Lumpur, set up by the Federal Territories Ministry for the homeless to receive job skills training.

The centre is where those who have been rescued from the streets are sent to after their mental and physical states are evaluated.

The residents here are taught farming, tailoring and woodworking.

After three months, they are expected to leave the centre, return to the outside world — ideally with their confidence and vigour to rejoin society restored — and fend for themselves.

However, not everyone who goes to the centre is ready to leave after the stipulated period.

In that case, they can apply for an extension but the applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis by **Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL)**, which runs the centre.

The three men whom *StarMetro* featured in part one of our special series focused on the Anjung Kelana residents, have stayed on at the centre.

Basri Yanna, 45, has been at the centre for more than six months while Chandran Ramam, 73, and Hiew Jia Hua, 40, have been there for no less than four months.

StarMetro first met them a month ago. On our second visit, the men share their thoughts about the prospect of leaving the safety of the centre to face the outside world.

Living a simple life

"The outside world is certainly livelier than my current existence at the centre," said Hiew.

"However, it is also full of uncertainties," he admitted.

At the centre, residents get five meals a day and enjoy a comfortable living environment.

In the mornings, they get to work on the urban farm there.

For participating in the farming programme, Hiew said he was paid RM3 a day. In a week, he can earn up to RM20.

For volunteering in the December post-flood clean-up missions in Dengkil and Karak over five days, he received about RM300.

The full-day sessions saw him clearing water-damaged items and carrying them to rubbish dumpsters from affected buildings.

"I do not need much money. Just cash for handphone top-ups, instant noodles and cigarettes."

"As we cannot go out, there is no real need for me to earn much money," said Hiew.

He preferred to live simply, he said, as this meant not having to deal with work stress or family life.

On whether he missed having a social life, he said he learned not to expect too much.

"I had a girlfriend six years ago and she stayed with me at my family's house in Semenyih for a year."

"The relationship ended when I went to prison."

"Now, I do not have many friends. I realise people in my situation are not popular," he said.

But Hiew refuses to feel sorry for himself. "Whether one is happy or sad, life will still go on. So why be sad when you can choose to be happy?"

"Let go of your burdens and worries. The decision is up to you."

"It is all about learning to appreciate simple pleasures," he advised.

Seeing his mustard greens and ladies' fingers grow at the transit centre's farm is one of those simple pleasures.

> TURN TO PAGE 3

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Age, unemployment among reasons transit shelter residents stay longer

> FROM PAGE 1

"It is not instant gratification but seeing the vegetables I planted grow day by day, really gives me a lot of joy and satisfaction," he said. If he has to leave the centre, Hiew said he would adjust.

"Not many people would experience what I went through.

"Serving time in prison and living on the streets have turned me into a survivor.

"This is the one advantage I have over others, so no matter the circumstances, I will survive," he declared.

On what he intended to do to be self-sufficient, Hiew said he had faith in the kindness of people.

"I am sure I would not have to walk far before meeting a kind soul," he said, stressing that it was important not to worry too much about what tomorrow might bring.

"When I was living on the streets, I was satisfied as soon as I had RM200 in my pocket.

"I would only start thinking about my next move when I was down to my last RM30.

"If I needed new shoes for example, I would just buy a new pair and give my old one to another street person.

"This is the kind of outlook that has kept me going all this time," he said.

Potential job opportunity

Basri is turning the knob on his new radio when a kitten rubs up against his calf and gave a soft meow.

Satisfied that he has found the frequency of his favourite channel, he picks up the cat and pets it gently.

"I have been looking after this one since she was a few weeks old," he said of the kitten.

"At night, she sleeps on my bed. I feel responsible for these critters," he added.

Basri has been using his meagre income from working at the farm and preparing craftwork orders at the workshop to buy cat food.

He hoped the craft shop owner in Chow Kit, who has been commissioning the products from him, would hire him permanently.

"I heard he was looking for a room for me.

"Once suitable accommodation is found, I will move out of this place," he said.

A former convict, Basri has had a rough life.

His parents died when he was an infant and he was taken in by a family who claimed to be a friend of his late father.

He never went to school.

"I learned to read from friends. My adoptive siblings went to school but I did not.

"I have lost contact with my family.

"I tried looking for them in Seremban but discovered that they had moved and I could not locate them," he said.

Despite being on the receiving end of this curve ball, Basri remained steadfast in his faith.

"When life gets hard, I think of it as a challenge.

"I keep myself busy by working at the farm.

"Sometimes I listen to religious sermons on the radio, it helps me to calm down," he said.

He revealed that he had some special in his early 20s.

"We were engaged, but marriage

Hiew, who starts his day at the urban farm in Anjung Kelana, says watching the plants grow gives him a deep sense of satisfaction.

— Photos: RAJA FAISAL HISHAN and GRACE CHEN/The Star



StarMetro's previous report on the three men published on Feb 28.

"When life gets hard, I think of it as a challenge. I keep myself busy by working at the farm."

Basri Yanna

did not happen because her parents disapproved of me.

"After that, I sort of gave up on dating and never tried again.

"I realise that I am a nobody. No one will want someone like me who is jobless and an ex-convict.

"But I am determined to better myself and prove that I can be someone useful to society," he said.

Fit for age

The oldest resident in Anjung Kelana, former lorry driver Chandran dreams of getting behind the wheel again, be it driving lorries or school vans.

But his advanced age means that most employers are not keen to hire him.

"When I attend job interviews, all they say is they will call me back. I know what that means.

"I am not asking for handouts from anyone. All I want is a job so I can support myself," he said.

Chandran felt upset when he



Chandran, 73, the oldest resident in Anjung Kelana, wishes to drive a lorry or school van again.

"Let go of your worries. It is all about learning to appreciate simple pleasures."

Hiew Jia Hwa

looked at other residents at the homeless centre.

"I have 30 years over these people but what do I have to show for it? I am a nobody," he said.

A former drug addict, Chandran cut ties with his family years ago and has no plans to reunite with them anytime soon.

"My sisters are still alive. They are all grandmothers now.

"I disappointed them a lot in the past, so maybe it is best that I stay away.

"If I go back to my family, it may cause a lot of pain and I do not want to trouble them again," he said.

Like Basri, Chandran never felt like blaming God.

"I always believe in being thankful for what one has and God has plans for me.

"I am still physically fit despite my age, so I am grateful for that.

"Whatever has happened to me was a result of my own doing.

"We must look at those who are

"I am still physically fit despite my age, so I am grateful for that. We must look at those who are less fortunate than us."

Chandran Ratnam

less fortunate than us.

"There are those living in war-torn countries and going through famine," he said.

Chandran admitted feeling lonely at times, although he did not think marriage would solve his problem.

"If I was financially stable, I would love to get married.

"But in my current state, I am hardly eligible. I might end up causing more problems for my wife.

"I have had several girlfriends in the past but I was not ready to commit, so they left," he added.

On his extended stay in Anjung Kelana, Chandran said: "I was supposed to leave after the first three months. But without a job, where would I go?"

"If I leave now, I will end up homeless again."



STAR METRO WATCH

COUPON EXCHANGE

Selangor government is organising parking coupon exchange programmes at multiple local councils for citizens to exchange paper-based coupons for Smart Selangor Parking (SSP) app credits. Users who still have unutilised and unexpired coupons can transfer the coupons' values into their SSP accounts at Dewan Sivik MBPJ, Petaling Jaya on April 2 and 3 (10am to 4pm) and Dewan Jenjarum MBSA, Section 11, Shah Alam on April 9 and 10. Transactions can also be made at Innovative Technologies and Systems Sdn Bhd (ITS) office at F-4-G, Jalan Multimedia 7/AG, I-City, Section 7, Shah Alam.

TRAFFIC MATTERS

> Full road closures and traffic diversions along Persiaran Kerjaya, Shah Alam (both Shah Alam- and Subang Jaya- or Kuala Lumpur-bound) from 11pm to 5am, until May 30. Motorists from Shah Alam are required to turn left onto Jalan Presiden U1/1, then turn right to Jalan Presiden F U1/1.

> The opening of one lane along Persiaran KLCC/Jalan Binjai (Jalan Stonor-bound) between Jalan Lumba Kuda and Lorong Kuda will begin on April 4. Vehicles heading to Jalan Stonor will need to turn left onto Lorong Kuda and make a U-turn in front of The Oval to head to Jalan Stonor. The left-most lane of this stretch will remain closed for vehicular access. However, it will temporarily be turned into pedestrian walkway. Persiaran KLCC/Jalan Binjai (Jalan Ampang-bound) will also remain closed to facilitate the construction of the Persiaran KLCC MRT Station entrance construction.

BLOOD SCREENING

National Diabetes Institute (NADI) is having free blood screening at Diabetes Resource Centre (D'Centers), Bandar Botanic Klang, Klang, Selangor on weekdays from 9am to 5pm, until June 30. For details, call 03-3319 4100 / 4200 or email enquiry.dcentersdiabetes@gmail.com

FREE WEBINAR

The Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Kuala Lumpur and Selangor (KLSCCCI) will organise a free webinar on 'Innovation and Digital Transformation' today at 10.30am. This webinar will be conducted in mainly English and aims to assist members and SMEs in their digital transformation. To apply, visit <https://bit.ly/InnovationDT>. For details, call 03-4253 2135 (Loh) or email to inquiry@chinesechamber.org.my

MOBILE COUNTERS

Shah Alam City Council's mobile service - Shah Alam On Wheels - will be stationed at Plaza Masalam carpark in Section 9, Shah Alam on April 2, from 11am to 5pm. Counter services such as payment of assessment taxes and parking compounds will be available.

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTESTS

> The Shah Alam Photography Competition is open to Malaysians aged 18 and above. Categories include iconic buildings in Shah Alam, nature, night scenes and lifestyle. Deadline is Sept 15. To download entry forms, visit www.mbsa.gov.my

> Selayang Municipal Council will hold a photography and short video competition for its 25th anniversary celebration. Cash prize of RM20,000 await winners. For details, visit www.mps.gov.my

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Nasional 8



Sindiket boleh aturkan kedatangan jurunika dari Thailand ke Kelantan

Nasional 6



Berjuta bahan arkib Malaysia di luar negara

Oleh Fahmy A Rosli
fahmy.azril@bh.com.my

Kuala Lumpur: Bahan arkib berkaitan Malaysia yang berada di luar negara yang dianggapkan berjuta naskah perlu diperolehi kerana antaranya ia amat penting untuk dijadikan bahan bukti sekiranya negara berdepan konflik perebutan hak kedaulatan kawasan, sempadan atau wilayah.

Kegagalan memperoleh bahan arkib, termasuk dokumen rasmi dan tidak rasmi seperti fail pentadbiran, laporan dan perjanjian boleh membuatkan Malaysia 'berputih mata' untuk melindungi hak kepentingan negara dan rakyat di masa depan.

Ketua Pengarah Arkib Negara Malaysia (ANM), Jaafar Sidek Abdul Rahman, berkata usaha mendapatkan bahan arkib berkaitan negara amat

mustahak kerana ia dapat melengkap dan memperkukuhkan bahan bukti bagi membantu kerajaan menjalankan kajian serta penyelidikan mengenai persempadanan, mempertahankan hak kedaulatan serta pengesahan fakta sejarah negara.

"Nak dianggarkan saya rasa tak dapat bagi angka yang tepat tetapi pada pandangan saya, bahan arkib berkaitan negara kita ada berjuta lagi di luar negara sama ada disimpan oleh kerajaan ataupun pengumpul persendirian.

"Kalau kita pergi ke India misalnya, negara itu adalah salah satu tempat (penyimpanan) fail pusat pentadbiran antara British dengan kita. Dari Tanah Melayu dulu, ia (dokumen) akan pergi (disimpan) ke India dan kemudiannya ke United Kingdom (UK).

Nasional 3



Bazar Ramadan Jalan Raja Alang kembali 'bernyawa'

Orang ramai bersama keluarga memenuhi bazar Ramadan di Jalan Raja Alang, Kampung Baru, semalam bagi membeli juadah berbuka untuk hari pertama berpuasa. Kemeriahan ini dapat dilihat selepas lebih dua tahun kawasan ini sepi daripada kunjungan orang ramai berikutan pelaksanaan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP) bagi membendung COVID-19. Nasional 5

(Foto Aizuddin Saad/BH)

Johor benarkan jamaan berbuka puasa untuk 50 jemaah di masjid, surau

Nasional 4



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Peniaga bazar Ramadan harap kembali untung

Sambutan baik bantu pulihkan perniagaan terjejas teruk tahun lalu

Oleh Tuty Haryanti Ahmad Rodzi
hifzuddin@bh.com.my

Kuala Lumpur: Peniaga bazar Ramadan berharap mampu menjana pulangan sama seperti sebelum pandemik COVID-19 melanda dua tahun lalu, seterusnya memulihkan perniagaan mereka yang terjejas teruk akibat penularan virus berkenaan dan Perintah Kawalan Pergerakan (PKP).

Peniaga di Bazar Ramadan Jalan Raja Alang, Khairulhafiz Mohd Shafie, 33, ketika ditemui BH semalam, berkata dia sangat mengharapkan sambutan kali ini rancak semula seperti sebe-

lum pandemik dan perniagaan roti John diusahakan keluarganya sejak lebih lima tahun lalu turut mendapat manfaat.

"Tahun lalu dibenarkan berniaga juga dengan pematuan prosedur operasi standard (SOP), namun perniagaan tidak sama seperti sebelum itu, merosot teruk sehingga 50 peratus kerana tidak ramai pengunjung. Mungkin mereka masih takut dengan keadaan ketika itu. Kali ini, saya harap keadaan kembali pulih, mampu dapat pulangan lebih baik," katanya kepada BH.

Khairulhafiz yang turut menyediakan perkhidmatan menghantar makanan ke rumah menerusi pesanan e-hailing, berkata dalam keadaan negara semakin pulih dengan pembukaan semula sempadan, dia yakin untuk menambah modal dalam perniagaan dan berharap orang ramai tidak lagi takut untuk ke bazar Ramadan, mendapatkan juadah pilihan mereka.

Sementara itu, Norhayati Said, 55, yang berniaga maka-

nan Arab sambil dibantu suami, anak serta menantu, berkata ini kali pertama dia berniaga di Bazar Ramadan Jalan Raja Alang selepas mendapati lokasi itu berpotensi memberikan pulangan bagi menambah pendapatan keluarga yang terjejas.

"Saya berharap pengalaman pernah mengikuti ibu berniaga sebelum ini dapat membantu. Syukur, ada bantuan kewangan daripada kerajaan sebelum ini yang saya gunakan sebagai modal. Adik beradik juga meminjamkan pelbagai peralatan seperti meja," kata ibu empat anak ini.

Tinjauan di Masjid Jamek Kampung Baru tidak jauh dari bazar Ramadan berkenaan, mendapati persiapan menyediakan bubur lambuk istimewa setiap kali kehadiran bulan mulia untuk diedarkan kepada orang ramai, sudah bermula seawal jam 3 pagi dan dijayakan oleh kira-kira 30 sukarelawan.

Pengerusi masjid, Datuk Mohd. Khay Ibrahim, berkata

pihaknya menggunakan antara lima hingga enam tan beras sepanjang Ramadan untuk penyediaan bubur dengan keunikan tersendiri itu, atau 15 periuk bubur dimasak setiap hari menggunakan resipi tradisi sejak lebih 100 tahun lalu.

"Bubur akan siap dimasak kira-kira jam 11 pagi kemudian dibungkus sebelum diedarkan. Sebanyak 3,500 bungkus bubur akan mula diedarkan secara percuma selepas solat Asar kepada jemaah masjid dan secara pandu lalu di hadapan pintu masjid bagi memudahkan orang ramai.

"Bahan lain turut digunakan termasuk santan, udang, daging, rempah, bawang dan banyak lagi, membabitkan kos keseluruhan RM350,000. Kos meningkat kira-kira 25 peratus kali ini kerana harga kebanyakan barangan juga naik," katanya memaklumkan program edaran bubur lambuk Masjid Kampung Baru tidak diadakan pada 2020 kerana penularan COVID-19.

Tahun lalu dibenarkan berniaga juga dengan pematuan SOP, namun perniagaan tidak sama seperti sebelum itu. Kali ini, saya harap keadaan kembali pulih, mampu dapat pulangan lebih baik



Khairulhafiz Mohd Shafie, Peniaga

Syukur, ada bantuan kewangan daripada kerajaan sebelum ini yang saya gunakan sebagai modal. Adik beradik juga meminjamkan pelbagai peralatan



Norhayati Said, Peniaga



Sukarelawan menyediakan bubur lambuk di Masjid Jamek Kampung Baru. (Foto Asyraf Hamzah/BH)



Orang ramai membanjiri tapak Bazar Asia City, Kota Kinabalu, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)



Suasana di Bazar Taman Suria, Johor Bahru, semalam. (Foto BERNAMA)



Pengunjung membeli pelbagai juadah di Tapak Bazar Taman Tun Dr Ismail, semalam. (Foto Aziah Azmee/BH)

Targeted approach:
The FT Ministry launched a programme to uplift micro entrepreneurs at PPR Kerinchi in Pantai Dalam, Kuala Lumpur. — SAMUEL ONG/The Star

Tackling rise in urban poverty

Federal Territories Ministry has spent over RM151mil since the start of the pandemic to help 530,000 needy folk in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan.

By FARID WAHAB
faridwahab@thestar.com.my

TWO years ago, Sabariah Mahmud, 62, a home-based micro entrepreneur, sold curry puffs at 40sen a piece.

Last month, the mother-of-two who lives in a low-cost flat in Wangsa Maju, Kuala Lumpur decided to increase the price of the curry puffs, which came in three varieties — potato, sardine and chicken, to 50sen a piece.

Not all her customers were happy with the 10sen hike of her curry puffs.

"I did not want to increase the price as I understand that people are struggling with

the rising cost of living.

"But I had no choice as the prices of almost everything went up. I have to earn an income too," she said.

The Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent restrictions imposed to curb its transmission have massively disrupted the supply chain, resulting in rising prices of necessities.

While experts deliberate on the macro-economic aspects, ordinary folk like Sabariah, and other low-income households, are already feeling the brunt of high cost of basic necessities.

In the Federal Territories, at least 6,100 households are considered poor and 4,500

are hardcore poor, according to the National Poverty Data Bank System (eKasih).

A poor household is one that earns less than RM2,208 a month while the hardcore poor earns less than RM1,169 monthly.

Kuala Lumpur topped both categories with 4,051 poor and 3,865 hardcore poor households, while Labuan has 1,605 poor and 654 hardcore poor homes.

Putrajaya, despite its status as the administrative capital of Malaysia, also has its fair share of poor households at 67 and eight are in the hardcore poor category.

Federal Territories Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Rosida Jaafar said the ministry was paying serious attention to the

urban poverty issue.

She said the ministry spent RM151.3mil since the start of the pandemic on initiatives to uplift the needy involving 530,000 people in Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya and Labuan.

Among the initiatives were MyGrocer@Wilayah, MyFood@Wilayah, MyJob@Wilayah, MySchoolBus@Wilayah and MyMedic@Wilayah.


"Through the MyFood@Wilayah initiative, some 100,000 food baskets were distributed, especially to residents of public (PA) and people's housing projects (PPR).

> TURN TO PAGE 3

Ramadhan Promotion



























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Observing Qing Ming with caution

By JADE CHAN
jade@thestar.com.my

Time limits imposed and no access to some areas at KL cemetery

THOSE who paid respects to their ancestors and deceased family members for Qing Ming at Kwong Tong Cemetery (KTC) Kuala Lumpur over the weekend were told to limit their group to a maximum of eight, keep their rituals short and offerings simple as well as clean up after themselves.

Kwong Tong Cemetery Management Kuala Lumpur Association has also set a time limit of 90 minutes at cemeteries and 60 minutes for prayers at the pagoda area (which houses the columbarium).

The pagoda's indoor area is closed on weekends and tomorrow, which is the actual day of Qing Ming, as the association said there were more people and it would be difficult to observe physical distancing.

Derran Liew said the standard operating procedure (SOP) was easy to follow, even though he learnt about them only upon arrival.

The Sungai Long resident went with his siblings to offer prayers for his late mother.

"We are disappointed that we are not allowed to pay respects directly in front of her urn as it is housed in the pagoda's indoor area."

"As we are all working, we are only able to offer Qing Ming prayers on a weekend," he said.

Liew, 31, and his siblings made do by offering prayers and food at



Families offering prayers to departed loved ones at Kwong Tong Cemetery, Jalan Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka in Kuala Lumpur. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

the pagoda's dedicated prayer area and burnt some paper offerings for their late mother.

Evelyn Tan, who also visited on a weekend with her family, said they would have preferred being able to enter the pagoda's indoor area to view and offer prayers directly in front of her late father's urn.

"We were able to enter the pagoda and see his urn during pre-pandemic times so we are a

bit sad that we cannot do it now," said the 32-year-old from Ampang.

"However, our Qing Ming ritual remains the same, pre-pandemic and now."

"We offered some of my late father's favourite food like *nasi lemak*."

Sisters-in-law Yvonne Yong and Jess Lim said their family brought fewer offerings and reduced their prayer duration when restrictions were imposed last year.

"The one-hour limit for prayers at the pagoda area is enough," said Lim.

Yong felt that the association's advice to keep offerings simple and clean up after the rituals was practical and easy to follow.

Qing Ming, also known as Tomb Sweeping Day, is when Chinese families clean grave sites to commemorate their ancestors and honour those who have passed away. The festival's peak season is

between March 19 and April 17, with more people expected to head to cemeteries and columbariums this month now that Malaysia is entering the endemic phase.

KTC Qing Ming 2022 committee head Yong Pock Yau said its guidelines for Qing Ming were in addition to those set by the National Security Council.

It was reported that the SOP for Funeral Affairs for Non-Muslim Persons limited grave visiting to a maximum of 20 persons.

Those above 60 and children below 12 are discouraged from participating in the rituals.

"Our committee has been promoting the 'Go Green Qing Ming Tomb Sweeping Campaign' over the past few years in an effort to reduce waste," said Yong, adding that offerings should be kept simple with fruits, flowers and tea.

"Visitors are encouraged to visit KTC on weekdays to prevent overcrowding," said Yong, adding that most visitors were compliant.

"Families now come in smaller groups and we do not allow hawkers here to reduce crowding."

"We also urge visitors to be respectful of people's privacy and not shoot videos and upload them on social media," he said.

Watch the video
TheStarTV.com



Minimise food waste during Ramadan, KL bazaar traders told

By BAVANI M
bavanim@thestar.com.my

THE Malaysian Federation of Hawkers and Petty Traders Association wants Ramadan bazaar traders to prevent food wastage.

Association president Datuk Seri Rosli Sulaiman said that traders should reduce the amount of food prepared.

"Last year, so much unsold food was dropped off at mosques and homeless areas or ended up in the bins," said Rosli who is also Federal Territory Bumiputera Traders Association president.

He advised traders to lower their expectations of sales and be prudent, adding that they should focus on quality rather than quantity.

Rosli also noted that the number of Ramadan bazaar lots in Kuala Lumpur had dropped by 40%.

"This could be a result of people preferring to run their food delivery business from home," he said.

He added that prime locations such as Masjid India, Lorong Tuanku Abdul Rahman and UTC Sentul would continue to draw a crowd.

Meanwhile, Food Bank Foundation Malaysia chief executive officer Ab Wahab Long said there must be better coordination between government agencies, NGOs and soup kitchens when distributing food.

"There has to be a designated food distribution centre where volunteers can drop off and pick



A Kuala Lumpur City Hall sign in the city centre which says food distribution should only be carried out at designated spots. — Filepic

up food collected from Ramadan bazaars to the needy," he added.

Ab Wahab said traders would know by 5pm if there was a surplus and suggested a second trip at 7pm to collect what was remaining for *sahur*.

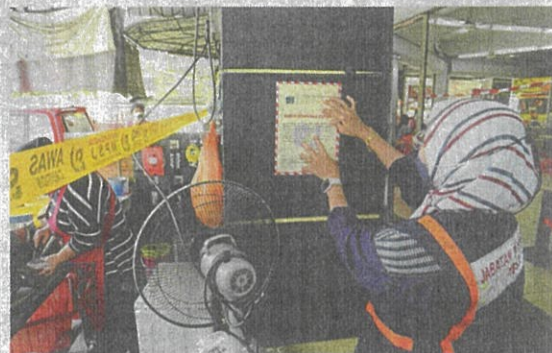
"We have been planning to do this for some time but government bureaucracy gets in the way."

It was reported that Kuala Lumpur City Hall had identified 72 Ramadan bazaar sites with 5,000 lots this year.

Ramadan food bazaars started yesterday while those selling clothes and accessories will open from April 9 to May 2.

"Last year, so much unsold food was dropped off at mosques and homeless areas or ended up in bins."

Datuk Seri Rosli Sulaiman



MBSJ personnel sealing off the eatery found to have violated conditions of its business licence.

Eatery in Taman Puchong Utama ordered to close

SUBANG Jaya City Council (MBSJ) conducted a joint operation on food premises to check on compliance within the commercial area of Taman Puchong Utama in Puchong, Selangor.

A total of 56 staff from MBSJ's health, enforcement, licensing and environmental management as well as its corporate and strategic management departments were involved.

In a statement, MBSJ said 68 food premises in Jalan PU 7/3 and Jalan PU 7/4 were inspected.

One eatery was ordered to close immediately after it was found to have violated conditions of its business licence and obtained below 65 marks (Grade D in the evaluation).

MBSJ said 14 compound notices were issued for various offences, comprising violations under

Section 15 of the 2007 (MBSJ) Food Establishment by-law for not properly maintaining premises; Section 9 of the Food Handlers by-law for staff without typhoid jabs; Collection and Rubbish Disposal by-law for not having a closed and properly maintained rubbish bin; and Advertising by-law for putting up advertisements without a licence.

There were also violations under Trade Licensing, Business and Industry by-law for violating licence requirements and Section 46 of the (MBSJ) Street, Drainage and Building Act 1974 for obstructing public access.

"MBSJ will continue to carry out periodic monitoring at commercial areas within its jurisdiction."

"Business owners are advised to always follow rules," said MBSJ. — By AIDA AHMAD

> FROM PAGE 1

"Some 23,000 households also received a monthly assistance in the form of a 5kg bag of rice throughout 2021," she said.

Rosida noted that under MyGrocer@Wilayah, four trucks selling groceries were sent to 49 locations, mostly PA and PPR areas.

"The items in these trucks are sold at prices that are between 5% and 20% cheaper than the usual market price," she added.

Amid the economic uncertainty caused by the pandemic, many companies opted to trim their workforce as part of a cost-cutting measure.

Many people became jobless in a matter of weeks, sparking concerns about widening inequality and of households slipping from the M40 category into the B40 group.

Rosida said low qualifications, reliance on only one income source and limited access to affordable housing were among factors trapping a person in poverty.

MyJob@Wilayah, a job-matching programme, offered 86,000 jobs in construction, maintenance, cleaning, packaging, manufacturing and service sectors.

"The Social Security Organisation helped to identify prospective employers and set up job interviews," she noted.

One such programme held at PPR Desa Rejang in Setiawangsa on Feb 26 this year, drew 145 jobseekers.

Eight from that group secured a job while another 84 qualified for a second interview,

86,000 jobs offered through initiative



Rosida says a pilot project is set to launch at PPR Kerinchi this month.



A resident receiving food aid under MyFood@Wilayah from Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shahidan Kassim (right) and his deputy Datuk Seri Jalaluddin Alias (centre) at Seri Lempah Flats in Taman Desa last year. — Filepic

said Rosida.

"Meanwhile, 465 trading kiosks in Kuala Lumpur and 99 in Putrajaya were given to young entrepreneurs to do business.

"We are targeting to allocate up to 1,000 such kiosks at strategic locations within this year," she explained.

Rosida also said a pilot project was set to launch at PPR Kerinchi in Pantai Dalam this month, aimed at tackling poverty.

Under a partnership with the private sec-

tor, Economic Planning Unit, Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) and community leaders, the project would see 70 residents being recruited and trained to become micro entrepreneurs.

"Participants are chosen based on data provided via the eKasih registry," she said, adding that they would be coached on marketing strategies, in addition to receiving training and equipment.

The business types include food and beverage,

age, groceries, car workshops, nursery and alternative treatments, as well as beauty and care services.

Last year, the ministry, through its Bumiputra Economic Empowerment Programme, spent RM1.97mil training aspiring entrepreneurs.

Some 180 people, most of whom were residents of PPR and PA benefited from the initiative, which also included an initial capital injection.

Each participant received between RM10,000 and RM20,000 and their target was to make a profit of between RM2,000 and RM6,000 within the first few months of operation.

Under the MyMedic@Wilayah initiative, some 7,400 PPR and PA residents benefited from its free basic medical consultation as of last December.

With 264 sessions being held at 16 locations last year, Rosida said it aimed to help lighten the financial burden in terms of medical cost.

"Meanwhile, under MySchool@Wilayah, 11,500 students from low and medium-cost housing received free transport to school by bus," she said.

Among the locations covered were PA and PPR homes, DBKL workers' quarters and nurseries under the Welfare Department.

KL's hardcore poor shot up by 270% after pandemic

THE number of hardcore poor in Kuala Lumpur shot up by nearly 270% over two years.

Data from the Federal Territories Ministry showed that there were 3,865 hardcore poor families in 2021 compared to only 1,048 in 2019.

According to the national poverty standard, a household is considered hardcore poor if their monthly income is below RM1,169.

The number of poor families in the same period also showed a drastic 41% increase, going from 2,871 in 2019 to 4,051 last year.

A poor household is one whose monthly income is below RM2,208, after a revision in 2020 which previously saw the figure at RM980.

Putrajaya, meanwhile, recorded a more than 20-fold climb in the number of poor households, from only three in 2019 to 67 last year.

Labuan followed a similar pattern, with a 170% surge, from 593 households in 2019 to 1,605 in 2021.

Its population of hardcore poor also swelled by some 300%, going from 163 in 2019 to 654 last year.

The number of poor and hardcore poor in the Federal Territories is expected to soar again next year when the poverty

line is revised.

On March 7, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department (Economy) Datuk Seri Mustapa Mohamed told the Dewan Rakyat that this might take place in the first quarter of 2023.

He said the government, under the 12th Malaysia Plan, was committed to eradicating hardcore poverty.

Malaysia's poverty rate, he noted, had changed significantly in the last five decades, owing to overall economic growth and the New Economic Policy.

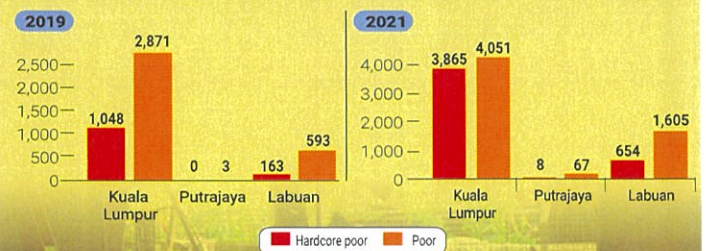
"However, the country continues to face several challenges, such as the poor who still exist in urban and rural areas, as well as in Orang Asli settlements.

"The issue of low wages, as well as regional inequality, coupled with the impacts of the Covid-19, have impacted household income," Mustapa was quoted as saying.

On March 28, Deputy Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Jalaluddin Alias told Dewan Negara that a unit had been set up under the ministry to address the rising urban poverty issue.

He said a task force would be formed to supply essential goods to the needy in view of the upcoming Hari Raya Aidil Fitri. — BY FARID WAHAB

Hardcore poor and poor households in the Federal Territories in 2019 and 2021



Source: Federal Territories Ministry

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Dua beradik diselamatkan selepas enjin bot rosak ketika memancing

LABUAN - Dua beradik yang dikuatiri hilang selepas gagal pulang daripada aktiviti memancing di kawasan laut Semarang sejak Sabtu, telah ditemui dengan selamat.

Muhammad Nuhidayat Jafari, 18, dan abangnya Muhammad Nabil Jafari, 22, telah diselamatkan oleh Agensi Penguatkuasaan Maritim Malaysia (APMM), pagi Ahad.

Kedua-dua mereka dilaporkan telah keluar ke laut pada jam 5 pagi 2 April, namun enjin bot mereka rosak ketika sedang memancing, namun berjaya membuat panggilan kepada ibu mereka yang kemudiannya memaklumkan kepada pihak berkuasa.

Ketua APMM Zon Labuan, Kepten Nurdin Jusoh berkata, bot peronda telah dikerahkan untuk membuat operasi mencari dan menyelamatkan (SAR) selepas pihaknya menerima laporan pada 8.40 pagi Ahad.

SAR tersebut turut disertai anggota-anggota daripada polis marin, Tentera Laut Diraja Malaysia (TLDM) dan Jabatan Bomba dan Penyelamat.

"Pemancing adik beradik berkenaan cuba mendapatkan bantuan daripada pemancing lain di kawasan itu namun tidak berjaya, sebelum operasi menemukan mereka dan bot mereka itu dibawa ke pangkalan APMM di sini" katanya.

Bernama

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BOAT ENGINE MALFUNCTION

Two anglers rescued after being adrift in waters off Labuan

LABUAN: Two siblings who were reported missing while out fishing in waters off Semarang here on Saturday have been found safe and sound.

Muhammad Nuhidayat Jafari, 18, and his brother Muhammad Nabil, 22, were rescued by a team from the Labuan Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA) yesterday morning.

Labuan Zone Maritime chief maritime Captain Nurdin Jusoh said the duo set out to sea around 5am on Saturday, but their boat's engine malfunctioned when they

were fishing.

He said they only managed to make a distress call to their mother at 8.40am yesterday and she immediately alerted the MMEA.

The search-and-rescue team comprising personnel from the marine police, navy, and Fire and Rescue Department located their boat soon after that and brought them to safety, he added.

"The two siblings attempted to get help from other anglers in the vicinity, but to no avail as their boat had to be towed to shore," he said. **Bernama**



The two siblings who were reported missing while fishing in waters off Semarang, Labuan, are hugged by their mother after being rescued by the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency yesterday. PIC COURTESY OF

MMEA