

UMS to be free of plastic bottles within 2 months

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KOTA KINABALU: Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) will be declared as an institution free of plastic bottles within the next two months, said UMS Eco-Campus



Dr Hassanal

Management Centre Director, Dr Awangku Hassanal Bahar Pengiran Bagul.

He said they had spoken to the university's co-operatives to stop selling water bottles and install water dispensers instead.

"We are not trying to ban any usage of water bottles. We tried to be realistic especially during big events, therefore, we gave them two options - either to sell refillable water bottles costing less than RM10 or sustainable made mineral bottles with the PET logo," he said.

"Plastic bottles are the third top trash in UMS whereas the first is plastic, followed by paper," he said, adding that they had done a pilot testing and will implement the programme throughout the university.

"Of course, we will also look as well as go through the people's lifestyle and try to address their needs," he added.

Hassanal said this during a Waste Management Talk at the university's Chancellery Building here, Wednesday, with invited speakers from Hokkaido University, Japan, Dr Nobuyuki Tsuji and UMS Faculty of Engineering, Dr Nurmin Bolong.

Tsuji is actively involved with the recycling centres in Furano, Japan and was specially invited by UMS to help create the organic compost at the university's recycling centre as well as designing the building of the in-house recycling centre.

According to Hassanal, the university's chancellery building in the next two months will not be allowed to use plastic bottles, explaining that the chancellery should set a good example to the rest as it is the university's administrative building.

He said UMS, being an eco-campus university, should do a significant change and that they had done a lot of programmes in the past, including energy management, waste management and green office.

Later, Hassanal explained that the building of the university's in-house recycling centre will be postponed after the Hari Raya celebration.

"There will be a recycling centre in UMS as we had signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Hattareka Perunding Sdn Bhd. However, this is part of their corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme, therefore we cannot rush them," he explained.

"So far, at the moment, we have started separating our trash which is recycled by another company. Once the recycle centre is finished, then we will take the job and recycle the trash ourselves," he said.

With the completion of the recycling centre, he said most of the dry wastes will be sent to the recycling centre and turned into energy blocks.

"The energy blocks will then be sold to outside industries for their fuel. UMS Link, on the other hand, will be handling the commercial side of the recycling centre," he said, adding that food wastes on the other hand will be turned into compost, which then helps to improve the quality of fertilisers.

The profit will then be invested in the university's green financing to purchase solar or wind turbines for generating power purposes.