



The Universiti Malaysia Sabah volunteers with the 90kg of garbage collected from the beach.

UMS students, staff clean up beach

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KOTA KINABALU: The students and staff of the Faculty of Medicine and Health Science (FMHS), Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) participated in the annual beach cleaning entitled “Jom Ke Pantai Kita Bah” at the Outdoor Development Centre (ODEC) UMS, recently.

The event was organized by Eco Campus FMHS in conjunction with the 25th anniversary celebration of UMS establishment.

Despite a brief drizzle during the event, the strong team managed to brave through the rain and ensure the cleanliness of ODEC, which stretched about 1.4km in length.

The programme was officiated by Dr Yeap Boon Tat, Deputy Dean of Students' Affairs and Alumni FMHS UMS.

In his officiation speech, Dr Yeap emphasized the importance of global awareness towards environment and the initiatives that each of individuals can

undertake to limit the usage of plastic in daily living.

“Everyday, we are consuming plastics, indirectly. We eat fishes and seafood that were exposed to plastics and heavy metal wastes – for example mercury. We should try to reduce the usage of plastics which are difficult to degenerate. That is why the Eco campus FMHS UMS is now taking the first effort to ban the usage of plastic bags and straws in the faculty effective April 2019. This showed how serious FMHS is taking its stand towards environment awareness and safety,” Dr Yeap mentioned.

Associate Professor Dr Piakong Mohd Tuah, a senior lecturer at Faculty of Science and Natural Resources of UMS who also participated in the event, described in detail about the disastrous effects of plastics to the sea creatures and pollution.

“Plastics which were thrown into the sea were thought to be natural foods by

the whales and dugongs. They consumed it and inadvertently caused death. Marine plastic pollution had impacted at least 270 species worldwide, comprising about 87% of sea turtle species and 44% of sea bird species. This is a very saddening fact and there are some species of turtle that already extinct in the world,” Associate Professor Dr Piakong mentioned in his statement.

About 20 medical and nursing students together with lecturers and supporting staff of FMHS were present in the memorable event. They cleaned the stretch of beach and collected 90kg of garbage which were carefully disposed by the Kota Kinabalu City Hall.

“We hope UMS will hold this event regularly to raise awareness among students and staff towards the disastrous effect of plastics.

The cooperation and knowledge is important for the benefit of future generations,” Dr Yeap said.