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Being a good KL-ite starts with you

Show common courtesy and civic-mindedness to propel capital city to far greater heights



This FT Day, why not show your love for Kuala Lumpur through simple acts of kindness? – Filepic

Citycism
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ON Feb 1, it will be 47 years since Kuala Lumpur was awarded Federal Territory status.

The city shares the honour of being a federal territory with Putrajaya and Labuan.

After almost half a century as the federal capital, the changes are evident in Kuala Lumpur's landscape, facilities, infrastructure and services.

While we can proudly say that it has advanced by leaps and bounds in the said areas since 1974, there is one aspect where it has not — the sense of responsibility among residents.

While there are obligatory responsibilities such as paying taxes, it is the simple things like not littering and lending a helping hand to those in need that are the building blocks to making a federal capital we can all be proud of.

But, sadly this is not the case as a majority of us are too wrapped up in other things to look beyond ourselves.

One incident that sticks out was at a grocery store recently.

With the government's mandate for a reduced workforce to minimise exposure to Covid-19, there were only a handful of people manning the payment counters.

Unfortunately, this also meant long lines as customers had to wait their turn to pay.

A couple in front of me with a trolley full of supplies continuously complained about the slow moving lines, loud enough for the cashier to hear.

The cashier showed no emo-

tion and went on with her task.

When it was finally the couple's turn to pay, the cashier processed their items and wished them good day upon handing over the receipt.

Just as the couple were about to walk away, an elderly man from the line next to us stopped them and said:

"It is not her fault, she is only doing her job, we just have to be patient."

The couple looked taken aback, but did not say anything nor offer an apology to the cashier.

Although this incident lasted only 15 minutes, it was an eye-opener.

The couple's selfishness was offset by the elderly man's action in advising them that their behaviour was unacceptable.

I am narrating this incident to show the lack of common courtesy exhibited by many city folk on a daily basis.

Just like good ones, every negative attitude has a snowball effect.

We are quick to point out the failings of the authorities, but not so when it comes to our own shortcomings.

We expect the authorities to resolve every issue when it is usually our own actions that caused the problem in the first place.

Being a good citizen does not have to be difficult. Knowing our responsibilities as a city dweller is the first step.

So, this FT Day, why not spend the day looking beyond ourselves?

It could be saying thank you to someone for their service or speaking out against injustice.

And it can even be as simple as picking up after yourself or taking it a step further by cleaning up litter around you.

Happy FT Day, Kuala Lumpur!