



Rosli pointing to a solar panel with LED lights.



A DBKL contractor installing solar panels on a bus stop's roof in Wangsa Maju.



Steel frames installed on Duke 2 pillars to encourage the growth of creepers.

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UPON approaching the township, a banner with the words "Welcome to Section 1, Wangsa Maju — the first low-carbon neighbourhood in Kuala Lumpur" — greets visitors.

Put up by residents, it proudly declares the intentions and efforts of the community and Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to make the township green.

At a community park down the road, another banner informs residents that DBKL and the International Green Training Centre are collecting data to measure the level of greenhouse gas emissions in the area.

These signs are an indication that Wangsa Maju is slowly but surely moving towards reducing its carbon footprint.

Throughout the township, there are more signs showing efforts to harness renewable energy.

They include the solar PV wind turbine at a park near Jalan Genting Kelang and solar panels installed on LED lights along the Sungai Bonus walking path.

Solar panels are also being installed on top of bus stops throughout the township.

These steps are the first of many DBKL is taking towards carbon neutrality.

Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Mahadi Che Ngah said more indicators would be visible by March.

"By then, residential units, schools and even commercial buildings will have solar panels on their roofs to reduce the town's greenhouse gas emissions.

"Our aim is to reduce the township's carbon footprint until it is able to produce its own energy," Mahadi told *StarMetro* in an exclusive interview.

Last May, he revealed DBKL's plans to develop Wangsa Maju into a carbon-neutral township under a pilot project with the aim to turn Kuala Lumpur into a carbon-neutral city by 2050.

To achieve that, the city came up with a two-pronged plan.

The first is to establish a carbon-neutral project framework for the Wangsa Maju carbon-neutral growth centre under Kuala Lumpur Carbon Neutral 2050.

The second is to identify suitable development concepts and projects that will serve as a reference for upscaling to other strategic zones.

"We knew we could not do it alone.

"In order to make any impact, we needed the community to get involved, so we engaged with stakeholders and held focus group discussions with schools, malls and commercial centres," said Mahadi.

The mayor identified 20 potential climate actions in leading the zone to carbon neutrality by 2050, covering five sectors — energy, waste, mobility, green and open spaces, as well as community.

Reaping green rewards

After Wangsa Maju, residents in Setiawangsa and KLCC slated to benefit from DBKL's low-carbon initiatives



Mahadi: Our aim is to reduce Wangsa Maju's carbon footprint until it is able to produce its own energy.

The energy and waste sectors cover rooftop solar panels, floating solar panels, anaerobic digesters, waste-composting plants and waste recycling points.

The mobility sector focuses on pedestrian and cycling networks as well as public transport.

Green and open spaces include eco-parks and river-cleaning efforts as well as urban gardens and vertical gardens.

For the community sector, urban farming, community recycling programmes, community water- and energy-saving initiatives are some of the areas that need to be developed.

Residents living in the Wangsa Maju Section 1 flats are the closest beneficiaries of the 80 solar panel LED lights that now dot the Sungai Bonus walking path.

"The lights come with sensors that operate from 7am to 7pm, with only 30% power consumption if there is no movement," said DBKL Planning Department senior deputy director Rosli Nordin.

"We decided to build a staircase from the flats to the walking path to encourage the flats' residents to jog or take a stroll here in the morning and evening."

To ensure safety and security, CCTV cameras and lights were installed as well, he added.

The walking path has been adopted by residents as a community garden project.

"The stretch from Jalan 1/27A and Jalan 2/27A has been upgraded with railings and proper walkways for the community.

"Even the pillars of the Duke 2 highway have been installed with metal frames to encourage creepers which will cover the entire



Visitors strolling on the Sungai Bonus walking path which has been installed with 80 solar panel LED lights.
— Photos: YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

structure," said Rosli.

Over at Wangsa Sari People's Housing Project (PPR), more community farms are being set up along the riverbanks.

DBKL is also installing more solar panels, while a rainwater-harvesting system as well as a composting system are being planned for the area.

Apart from installing solar panels at DBKL buildings, City Hall is working with companies such as Aeon Wangsa Maju, which is planning to instal solar panels on its rooftops.

Schools like SK Wangsa Maju and apartments have also been identified for solar panel installations.

Once implemented, users will see their electricity usage reduce by 50%.

Over at Jalan Andaman, some 92 solar panels will be installed near Aeon Wangsa Maju and at bus stops.

The project is being done in 10 phases, starting from Wangsa Maju's Section 1.

"Once we run solely on renewable energy, we won't be emitting carbon and the air will be cleaner and cooler.

"Rivers will be pristine, people will be healthier and electricity bills will be reduced," said Mahadi, adding that City Hall was aiming to complete the project this year.

Similar initiatives would be car-



A wind turbine combines with a solar panel to generate power for use at a park in Wangsa Maju.

ried out in Setiawangsa and Kuala Lumpur City Centre next, said the mayor.

Resident Zainal Abidin, 67, was spotted taking a walk near the Sungai Bonus walking path.

He said the pilot project was the best thing to have happened to the township.

"The upgraded walking path has made it safer for us," he said.

Another resident who only wanted to be known as Norzaini, said she now made the effort to go

on morning walks.

"Being here is nice as the area has been cleaned, painted and is so much brighter," she said.

Resident Annie Raj, 46, said she appreciated DBKL's initiative to build a staircase to provide them with a shortcut from their flats to the Sungai Bonus walking path.

"Since it has been built, more people are using the trail and I don't see vagrants and drug addicts around here anymore," she added.