



(From second left) Maimunah and Kok visiting a stall at the riverside market during the opening ceremony of the Klang River Festival.



A local singer performing at the opening ceremony at the riverside behind Millerz Square, Kuala Lumpur.

Connecting river and its community

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Festival encourages locals to preserve Sungai Klang

AN ANNUAL festival has made a stretch of Sungai Klang near Jalan Kelang Lama, Kuala Lumpur, lively through various activities.

The Klang River Festival, presented by KongsikL and supported by Exsim Group, aimed to revitalise the river through various community initiatives to enhance the environment and strengthen the people's connections with the river.

KongsikL president Joseph Foo has pledged to activate the river area through various initiatives to empower those living by the riverside.

"We want to encourage more river stewardship. Whether your priority is on big issues like climate change or local concerns like liveability, we can all come together to preserve the river."

"I hope that the conditions will be made more conducive in one to two years' time to facilitate activities such as walking, cycling and even farming," he said during the festival's opening ceremony at the riverside behind Millerz Square.

The festival featured a series of workshops, exhibitions, performances, screenings and a riverside market.

Prior to the opening ceremony, activities such as educational programmes, writing workshops and riverside tree planting had taken place for months since September, according to a statement by KongsikL.

Also present were Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Maimunah Mohd Sharif, Seputeh MP Teresa Kok, Think City managing director Datuk

Hamdan Abdul Majeed and Tourism Selangor industrial development department manager Chua Yee Ling.

Maimunah said she was fully supportive of the festival, which was in its third edition this year.

She hoped there would be more collaborations to leverage the environment, particularly the river.

"This programme upheld the spirit of '4P' which stands for public, private, people and partnership, fostering a meaningful convergence of ideas between different stakeholders in preserving the river."

Maimunah said she aspired to make the river safe and clean so that various community activities could be conducted there.

"If the river is clean enough, it could even be a source of drink-

ing water in the future.

"Most importantly, the people must be responsible to not litter and dispose of wastewater and chemicals improperly into the river," she said.

She also expressed her dedication towards a zero-waste Kuala Lumpur next year, calling for more non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to achieve this goal together.

"Cleanliness has always been one of my priorities since I was sworn in as the mayor."

"We need to rope in more NGOs to work together to create a cleaner, greener, safer, healthier and happier Kuala Lumpur."

"This is not just about clearing rubbish and planting trees."

"We need to ensure we have clean governance and green initiatives such as green procure-

ment, green production and green consumption to establish a circular economy," she said.

Kok urged Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to include the festival in its annual agenda so that the event could be upscaled.

"The Federal Government had recently said it would restart the River of Life project. Events like this play a crucial role in supporting this effort."

"We need more NGOs, businesses as well as the community to come up with concepts to beautify the river."

"DBKL and the Department of Irrigation and Drainage should facilitate more public-private cooperation on this matter."

"Rivers are the origin of cities and our civilisation."

"We must protect them," she added.