

LIKE many cities, Kuala Lumpur faces the harsh realities of rapid development, where trees and green spaces are often sacrificed in the name of urbanisation.

The tree-planting programme, initiated to counter this loss, is a much-needed step toward addressing environmental concerns.

However, there is a critical issue that we must address: Trees that are chopped down are rarely replaced at a rate that keeps up with the ongoing deforestation.

This gap between tree removal and replanting raises questions about the true sustainability of the efforts.

The target for tree planting in Kuala Lumpur stands at ambitious numbers.

The city administration aims to plant some 50,000 trees yearly to achieve one million trees by 2040, but can we ever truly meet these targets in a way that is meaningful and impactful?

Trees are being removed for development purposes but the replanting efforts do not always compensate for this loss.

The programme needs to focus on replacing the trees but also planting the right trees – native species that offer ecological benefits.

Planting random or non-native trees may not restore the biodiversity or carbon-capture capacity target.

It's time we ask how the authorities are tracking the success of tree-planting initiatives.

Are the new trees surviving? Are they receiving the care and attention needed to thrive in an urban environment?

Without adequate monitoring and reporting, it is difficult to gauge if the targets are being met or if the efforts are merely symbolic.

Engaging local communities in these programmes can drive better outcomes.

Tree planting should not be a top-down initiative but a

Time to measure impact of tree-planting initiatives

Urban greening should involve community, prioritise native species

collaborative effort.

Schools, businesses and residents can participate in the planting and long-term maintenance of trees.

When people feel a connection to the green spaces in their city, they are more likely to protect and preserve them.

Beyond tree planting, we need to reimagine how we incorporate green spaces into our urban fabric.

Vertical gardens, green rooftops and urban forests are some solutions that can complement tree planting.

These methods would enhance biodiversity, reduce the urban heat island effect and provide space for wildlife in the city.

While planting new trees is vital, we must also emphasise the preservation of existing trees.

Mature trees provide immense value in terms of air quality, shade and carbon sequestration.

Protecting existing trees should be as much a priority as planting new ones.

The programme should include long-term care strategies for newly planted trees, including watering systems, regular maintenance and measures to prevent diseases and pests.

Urban tree care should not end once the tree is planted.

Developers should also be incentivised to incorporate green spaces into their projects, ensuring that large-scale developments don't come at the expense of trees and nature.



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This would contribute to a more balanced, sustainable cityscape.

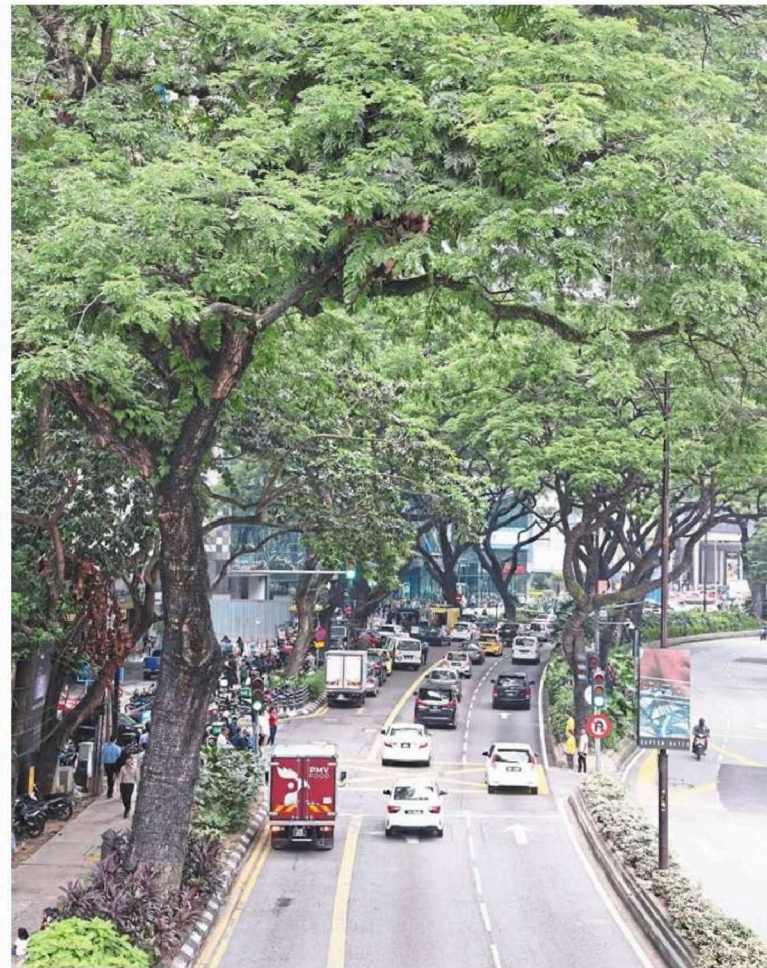
Raising awareness about the importance of trees for the city's ecosystem, health and climate should be a priority.

Informing residents about how they can get involved in tree planting and care can help foster a culture of environmental stewardship.

While Kuala Lumpur's tree-planting programme is a commendable initiative, it requires a shift in focus toward more sustainable, strategic practices.

Simply meeting planting targets isn't enough – we need to ensure that these trees thrive and the loss of existing trees is minimised.

A comprehensive, long-term strategy that involves the community, prioritises native species



Protecting existing trees in cities should be as much a priority as planting new ones. — Filepic

and includes innovative urban greening techniques will be essential for making Kuala Lumpur a true green city.

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