

MAJLIS BANDARAYA SHAH ALAM
(BAHAGIAN KORPORAT DAN PERHUBUNGAN AWAM)

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Costly change to go green

Shah Alam traders agree with polystyrene ban but worry about rising costs

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IT IS not easy to switch from polystyrene to biodegradable or recyclable products, especially when you are trying to make ends meet.

Night market traders such as Abdul Hamid Hashim, who has been in the food business for more than a decade, said it would be tough when the ruling was fully implemented in Selangor next year.

"The price of these products is my main concern. If the state government assists us by lowering the price, then more traders will be happy to switch without having to worry about rising costs," the 63-year-old said after the launch of the Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) Zero Polystyrene 2017 campaign.

Abdul Hamid, who sells chicken rice and fried noodles in Section 17 and 24, felt the current prices of the biodegradable and recyclable products were too steep, often more than double the price of similar polystyrene products.

He added that those who visit night markets deemed it a hassle to bring their own food containers along unless they were purchasing food in large quantities.

Another trader, Zamri Kassim, said the move was timely as MBSA had been constantly promoting its various green projects.

"It is important for us to move forward like other developed countries and stop using polystyrene boxes completely," he said.

However, Zamri agreed price could be a factor that deterred the traders from adopting a greener practice.

MBSA is following the call by the state government to stop using plastic bags and polystyrene by January next year.

Green Technology and Environment committee chairman Elizabeth Wong had, in August, requested that all official events and buildings of the Selangor government start the ball rolling by implementing the move as soon

as possible.

Wong, who was present at the launch, said she was proud of MBSA for its continuous green efforts even before the state government came up with the directive.

She added that the state was also in the midst of cleaning up the heavily polluted Klang river.

"Our appointed contractor found most of the rubbish collected from the river was either plastic bags or polystyrene boxes," said Wong,

adding that she was confident the campaign would help reduce such rubbish in the river.

"Councillors should also play their role in encouraging the public to go green and educate them from time to time on the importance of not using polystyrene products," she said.

Wong later presented business licences to food truck operators and handed out MBSA Zero Polystyrene 2017 campaign posters to supermarket owners operating in the city.

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Abdul Hamid (right) taking a closer look at the biodegradable and recyclable products on display after the launch of the campaign.