

# Encouraging community gardening

DG says DBKL willing to provide its expertise and knowledge to residents on the effort

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RESIDENTS of the Raya Permai People's Housing Project (PPR) have been provided a herb nursery by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to further their "Jom Berkebun" community gardening effort.

As part of the Local Agenda21 action plan, DBKL, International Association of Lions Club and Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) have set-up an additional nursery with 300 species of herbs as part of a pilot project.

DBKL director-general Datuk Amin Nordin Abdul Aziz said the collaboration between DBKL, the private sector, non-governmental organisations and residents have been a fruitful one.

"DBKL only stepped in for

major repairs, while residents took care of the place for so many years with little interference from DBKL.

"The nursery allows them to grow their own plants from seedlings in vegetable plots, which they can then plant back into the plots once grown.

"The plots were originally abandoned areas, among many in Kuala Lumpur, and DBKL cannot afford to maintain all these areas.

"DBKL maintains 15 major parks, including nearly 500 children's playgrounds within our budget as these require contractors to tend.

"We encourage residents associations through LA21 to come forward and make suggestions to take over these pocket parks from DBKL as their efforts will reduce our burden," he said.

He added that residents have requested a tool-shed for their gardening needs, which DBKL would provide.

In addition to uniting the 3,800 residents in the area, the herb and vegetable garden could become a source of income if the produce was sold.

UPM agriculture faculty Dr. Halimi Mohd Saud said the university has RM30,000 in funding that covers all the "Jom Berkebun" initiatives that include one in Sungai Bunus and Kampung Baru Air Panas, Setapak.

"Because we do not have much in terms of funds, we provided our expertise and knowledge to the residents by giving advise on building the nursery.

"We have taught residents how to use waste material and organic matter to compost, make natural pesticides as well as providing plant fertilisers," he said.

The Lions Club has been partners with DBKL in their efforts with LA21 for the past 15 years, in assisting to build the walkway in the Raya Permai area that stretches along to Bukit Jalil.



**Green initiative:** Mohd Amin (in white) looking at seedlings in the nurseries at the launch of the herb and garden project 'Jom Berkebun' at Taman Herba in Kuala Lumpur.