

BRL spreads Ramadan cheer to Lahad Datu community

Paul Ma

LAHAD DATU: The Borneo Rainforest Lodge (BRL) contributed 100 food packs to SK Lahad Datu 2 in conjunction with the Ramadan month, marking the season of giving.

"This is a simple and sincere way for BRL to demonstrate its ongoing commitment to the well-being of the community," said its chief operating officer, Sali Jamaludin.

He said the initiative was part of BRL's corporate social responsibility (CSR) programme which began in 2021, just before the challenges brought about by the pandemic.

"Even during those difficult times, the company remained committed to continuing the programme as supporting the community was a long-term pledge rather than a one-off effort," he added.

Sali said SK Lahad Datu 2 was identified as a key representative of the district's student population.

"We wanted to focus our 2026 Ramadan programme on a school that is deeply rooted in the district. It is an honour for BRL to support a school that plays such an essential role in nurturing the youth of Lahad Datu," he said.

Sali visited the school together with director of operations Hendry Filames. Through the initiative, he said BRL hoped to share a message of gratitude and compassion during Ramadan, a time for reflection and extending help to others.

"We hope this small gesture inspires a spirit of giving and kindness that lasts well beyond the fasting month, fostering a more compassionate environment for everyone in



Sali (second left) and Hendry (right) handing over the food packs to a pupil.

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Lahad Datu," he said.

Sali said supporting local communities was vital as the people were the true heart of any destination. For an operator such as BRL, a subsidiary of Yayasan Sabah Group, engaging with the community helps preserve Sabah's unique cultural identity and heritage.

"By being an active partner in local development, we help create a vibrant and thriving region that our international guests feel privileged to visit," he said.

He said the company intended to continue organising such

programmes as a permanent part of its operations.

"Since our first outreach in 2021, we have seen how much these gestures mean to the local community. We are already looking at our calendar for the coming year to see how we can further strengthen our outreach and reach even more groups within the district," he said.

Sali added that BRL's commitment to the community was an ongoing process, with the company constantly evaluating how it could best support the people of Lahad Datu through

various social and environmental initiatives.

"We aim to build on the success of our current programmes, ensuring that our outreach continues to be a positive and impactful force for the entire district in the years to come," he said.

Meanwhile, BRL staff also visited Sri Pritchard Home in Kinarut to deliver basic necessities for the welfare of its elderly residents.

The visit, led by BRL chief financial officer Eaner Chong and involving about 20 participants, was part of the company's CSR initiative aimed at supporting the needs of the home and bringing cheer to its residents.

The management of the home expressed appreciation for the contribution, noting that such donations help ease operational costs and ensure that residents continue to receive proper care and daily necessities.



Moddy (right) distributes bubur lambuk to healthcare staff.

Bubur lambuk handed out to Tambunan healthcare workers

TAMBUNAN: Demonstrating concern for healthcare workers, MP Project chairman Moddy Patrick together with the Sabah Islamic Medical Welfare Association (PERKIPS) recently distributed about 1,000 takeaway packs of bubur lambuk to staff at Tambunan Health Clinic, Tambunan Dental Clinic, SEDAFIAT and Tambunan Hospital.

The initiative was a token of appreciation for healthcare workers who remain committed to serving the community regardless of time and circumstances.

"Programmes like this reflect the community's support for frontliners who are constantly on the ground ensuring the

wellbeing of the people," Moddy said.

He also thanked all PERKIPS members and volunteers who contributed to the programme's success. Amid the demands of the healthcare sector, such gestures symbolise that the sacrifices of healthcare workers do not go unnoticed.

In a separate act of community support, Moddy also contributed zinc roofing sheets to a family in Kampung Kauran to repair their home damaged in a recent fire.

"We hope this contribution will help the affected family begin rebuilding their lives," he said, adding prayers for their strength and resilience in the recovery process.

Utilise practical skills amid economic challenges, public told

KOTA KINABALU: Former Kapayan assemblywoman Datuk Jannie Lasimbang said community programmes launched during her tenure were designed to build long-term household resilience, preparing residents to cope with periods of economic uncertainty such as the current global climate.

She made these remarks following a recent announcement by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, urging Malaysians to manage household spending carefully amid unpredictable economic conditions.

Recent geopolitical crisis, including developments

involving the United States and Iran tensions, are creating ripple effects across the global economy.

Economists warned that prolonged instability could drive energy prices higher, fuel inflation and place additional pressure on household spending.

While Malaysia's direct trade exposure to Iran is limited, price fluctuations, currency volatility, and rising energy costs may still increase living expenses for ordinary households. With several major festive seasons approaching, Jannie advised families to plan their expenses carefully and strengthen their household resilience.

She noted that during her tenure, Kapayan introduced a variety of community-based initiatives aimed at equipping residents with practical skills to better manage resources and reduce daily costs.

"These programmes were never only about environmental awareness.

They were designed to assist communities become resourceful and self-reliant in managing their daily needs," added Jannie.

Initiatives implemented included composting household waste management, rainwater harvesting, community gardening, and small-scale cultivation activities such as

mushroom farming. Residents were also taught practical household skills such as cooking, food preservation, and extending the shelf life of food.

Workshops covered making jams, pickling and fermenting fruits and vegetables, preparing homemade sauces, and producing preserved foods such as ikan sardinie tauku.

"These skills help families reduce food waste, stretch their grocery supplies, and rely less on expensive processed food," she said.

Some programmes also introduced basic financial management, including simple cash flow planning to help

families better manage daily expenses and prepare for unexpected economic pressures.

"In uncertain economic times, the simplest practices can make the biggest difference.

"Growing food at home, preserving what we harvest, managing waste responsibly and understanding how to manage household cash flow are practical ways families can strengthen their economic resilience," she added.

Jannie also highlighted the value of traditional indigenous traditions, noting that generations of indigenous communities have emphasised careful household resource

management and self-efficiency.

"The programmes introduced in Kapayan were meant to build this kind of preparedness.

"What may have seemed like simple community activities were actually practical skills designed to help families face uncertain times," she said, urging residents to continue practising these habits and share the knowledge within their neighbourhoods.

"When families know how to manage their resources, preserve food, grow what they can, and plan household spending, they are better prepared to face economic challenges," she concluded.

'Why squatting may be healthier than sitting on the toilet'

Professor Dr Muhammad Irfan Mohamad Salmi and Associate Professor Dr Mohd Firdaus Mohd Hayati



Professor Dr Muhammad Irfan



Associate Professor Dr Mohd Firdaus

KOTA KINABALU: When faced with a choice between a sitting toilet and a squat toilet in public restrooms, most people today prefer the sitting toilet for comfort and convenience.

However, from a physiological perspective, the squatting position may actually be more suitable for the body during defecation.

Senior Lecturer at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Professor Dr Muhammad Irfan Mohamad Salmi, who is also a general surgeon and colorectal surgery fellow, explained that the process of defecation begins when stool enters the rectum.

"The expansion of the rectum triggers a nerve reflex that signals to the brain that it is time to have a bowel movement," he said.

Under normal circumstances, several things occur simultaneously. The anal sphincter muscles relax, the rectum contracts, and pressure in the abdominal cavity increases to help push the stool out of the body. However, there is an important anatomical factor that can make the process more difficult - the angle between the rectum and the anal canal, which is controlled by the puborectalis

muscle.

"In the normal sitting position, this muscle remains partially tense, causing the angle to remain sharper," Muhammad Irfan said, noting that this position creates resistance to the passage of stool.

In contrast, the squatting position relaxes the puborectalis muscle and straightens the angle between the rectum and the anus, reducing resistance and allowing the bowel to empty more completely with less straining. Excessive and repeated straining he noted, can increase pressure within the abdominal cavity and blood vessels around the anal region.

"In the long term, this may contribute to problems such as haemorrhoids, anal fissures and the sensation of incomplete bowel emptying," he added.

Therefore, defecation should ideally occur naturally without force. "If stool is difficult to pass, it

is better to wait for the body's natural urge rather than forcing oneself to strain," he advised.

Nevertheless, he said the physiological principles can still be applied. He suggested that individuals using sitting toilets lean slightly forward or place their feet on a small stool so that the knees are positioned higher than the hips.

"This position mimics the squatting posture and helps straighten the ano-rectal angle," he explained.

However, he cautioned against squatting directly on top of a sitting toilet bowl. "This practise is dangerous and

Posisi Duduk Posisi Mencangkung



Illustration showing the difference between sitting and squatting positions.

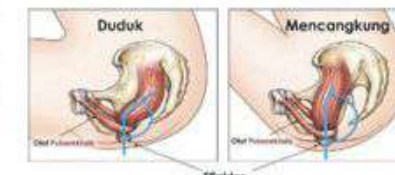


Illustration showing the angle formed in sitting and squatting positions.

may cause injuries if the toilet bowl breaks," he warned.

Beyond posture, toilet habits also play an important role in maintaining bowel health. Mohd Firdaus advised against bringing mobile phones into the toilet, as this can lead to spending excessive time seated.

Colorectal specialists generally recommend spending less than five minutes in the toilet for

bowel movements, with many people feeling the urge to defecate in the morning or after meals. Ignoring this natural urge can lead to constipation, as stool becomes harder and more difficult to pass if retained in the colon for too long.

Maintaining proper hygiene after defecation is also essential in preventing proctological problems. Cleaning the anal area with water or soft tissue can help reduce irritation to the sensitive skin around the anus.

"Avoid rubbing too harshly because the skin in this area is quite delicate," he advised.

Good hygiene practices not only provide comfort but also reduce the risk of inflammation, itching or infection in the ano-rectal area.

From a medical perspective, the squatting position is closer to the body's natural posture for defecation. It helps straighten the rectal passage, reduces resistance, and minimises the need for straining.

Although sitting toilets have become the modern norm, experts say that small adjustments in posture can still provide meaningful long-term benefits for bowel health.

Ultimately, the human body has its own anatomical design, and sometimes returning to basic anatomical principles can lead to better health outcomes.