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Air quality shows slight improvement

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - Air quality in the Klang Valley improved slightly over the last 24 hours, but Gombak, with a Malaysian Air Quality Index reading of 101, remained classified as "unhealthy".

According to the Department of Environment, air quality readings for today were 94 in Kuala Lumpur, 95 in Petaling Jaya, 77 in Shah Alam, 75 in Klang, 95 in Kajang, 78 in Seberang Prai, 62 in Sungai Petani, 63 in Ipoh and 82 in Nilai.

Other readings in the country include 27 in Kuantan, 28 in Kota Baru, 27 in Kemaman and 18 in Jerantut.

Under the Maqi air quality index, readings from 0 to 50 indicate good air quality, 51 to 100 moderate, 101-200 unhealthy, 201 to 300 very unhealthy and 301 to 500 hazardous.

Meanwhile, Science, Technology and Environment Deputy Minister Datuk Abu Bakar Daud said the haze that resurfaced over the week was far from being hazardous and was no cause for alarm.

The air quality, he said, was not as bad as it was made out to be.

The average national Maqi reading was less than 50 in urbanised areas like Kuala Lumpur and Penang, compared to major cities like Los Angeles which records a reading of up to 400.

"Our air is well within control," he said after launching a tree-planting ceremony at the Sungai Buloh Overhead Bridge Restaurant in Sungai Buloh. Also present were Projek Lebuh raya Utara Selatan Bhd managing director Ikmal Hijaz Hashim and Kuala Lumpur Pan Pacific Hotel general manager William Sayce.

The KL Pan Pacific had presented PLUS with 30 travellers palm as part of the Green the Nation campaign advocated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Yesterday, the New Straits Times reported that the air quality in Port Klang and Gombak had reached unhealthy levels for the first time this year with hazy conditions shrouding various parts of the country.

The air quality readings for Port Klang and Gombak had reached 111 and 106 respectively while the reading for Kuala Lumpur was 93, Petaling Jaya 84, Shah Alam 87, Kajang 88, Seberang Perai 90 and Nilai 98.

Abu Bakar said the Government would continue with greening efforts and ensure that emission released from vehicles and factories were of acceptable level.

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