

Bank Staff Take Part In Tree-planting Initiative In Sabak Bernam

NINETY OCBC Bank (M) Bhd (OCBC Bank) employees planted 90 mangrove trees at Tebuk Mendeleng in Sabak Bernam, Selangor.

Led by chief executive officer Datuk Ong Eng Bin, the activity was part of the bank's plan to plant 9,000 such trees at the 4.5ha site which will be monitored and nurtured over three years.

The RM684,538 initiative, to mark OCBC Group's 90th anniversary on Oct 31, is expected to give a total carbon sequestration of over 90 tonnes by 2025.

Mangrove trees are reputed to have among the highest carbon sequestration levels compared to other trees in the country.

The three-year initiative is in partnership with 2022 Merdeka Award recipient non-governmental organisation Global Environment Centre (GEC) as well as Friends of Kampung Dato Hormat Mangroves, better known locally as Sahabat Hutan Bakau Kampung Dato Hormat (SHBKDH).

It is designed to be carried out entirely by the local community under the guidance of GEC, and will benefit local residents of Mukim Sungai Air Tawar in Sungai Besar, Sabak Bernam.

SHBKDH was established by the local community with the support of GEC and the local authorities to facilitate protection and rehabilitation of mangroves in their village.

SHBKDH generates income for the local community through a mangrove nursery and rehabilitation activities with the support of corporate partners and Selangor government.

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Faizal Parish

"Restoring mangrove areas directly reduces GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions and guards against the impact of climate change," said GEC director Faizal Parish.

"Mangroves act as storm barriers that strengthen the resilience of coastal and estuary zones from climate-related hazards such as storm surges and sea-level rises, and reduces coastal erosion.

"In addition, mangroves act as 'carbon sinks' by absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, which helps reduce global warming," he added.

Ong said the bank was pleased



OCBC Bank employees, supported by GEC representatives, hard at work at the Tebuk Mendeleng mangrove site. In the foreground are Parish (holding bag) and Ong (in yellow cap).

that the initiative would benefit both the environment and economy of the local community.

"What excites us about the project is that it is not only about the environment but the community as well.

"Community involvement has been the theme of our existence these past 90 years.

"We are actively looking forward to involving the local community of Tebuk Mendeleng in the mangrove tree-planting and management exercise, to develop a sustainable source of livelihood for the local people and contribute to the improved governance of the natural resources around them.

"The project will not only

encourage the locals to enhance their efforts in managing the mangrove forests in their locale but also sustain both the newly-planted mangroves and existing ones.

"This project will increase local participation in mangrove forest protection and development by considering gender equality approaches as well," said Ong.