

Saturday October 10, 2009

## **‘No Plastic Mondays’ a success**

GEORGE TOWN: Almost 600,000 plastic bags were saved in 13 days - thanks to the state’s “No Plastic Mondays”.

From July 6 to Sept 30, Penangites avoided the use of 580,000 plastic bags, said Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

He said the data was provided by the 11 participating supermarkets, hypermarkets and retailers in the state.

“Last year, six major supermarkets and hypermarkets distributed as many as 25.2 million plastic bags in the state.”

“We are the first state in the country to cut down the usage of plastic bags through a voluntary programme and now the Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry is also embarking on a similar campaign,” he said after attending a Hari Raya lunch in Komtar yesterday.

Lim said consumers had to pay 20 sen for every plastic bag taken when making purchases on Mondays.

“We collected RM8,783 from the plastic bag charges and the money has been channelled to the ‘Partners Against Poverty’ fund aimed to help the state’s hardcore poor,” he said.

However, he noted that a “small number” of people had shouted at cashiers for refusing to give out free plastic bags on Mondays.

Lim said the state hoped to raise public awareness and spread the “green” message, adding that posters and flyers had been printed for this purpose.

He said the state would decide by end of the year whether to increase the number of “no plastic bag” days.

Meanwhile, Bukit Bendera MP Liew Chin Tong urged the Federal Government to prepare a “concrete green road map” so that the public is aware of the country’s plans for environmental conservation and measures to promote green technology.

“The Energy, Green Technology and Water Ministry must expand its ban on plastic bags nationwide rather than just limiting it to its premises,” he said.