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Malaysia urged to cut down plastic waste

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Plastic is amazing. Life would be less convenient without them. However, the convenience of it has come at a price, mostly because there are bunch of irresponsible people out there who always threw it away. The problem is that the items do not ever go away from the planet, they pollute it. There is an analysis of Asia's worst ocean polluters shows that the biggest individual consumers of plastic packaging were Malaysians and that is the starting point of the government urging to ban single-use plastics and work with companies to fund a recycling push. Furthermore, Malaysia is the eighth worst country worldwide for plastic waste which embarrassed our country who entitled as one of the famous countries in so many things especially beaches and island. (Zafirah Zein,2018) The World Wildlife Fund (WWF) reports, estimated Malaysia produced almost one million tonnes of mismanaged plastic waste in 2018. Most of our waste ends up in the oceans or beaches, poisoning and choking most of the marine life and sea birds. Some may become part of one of the big islands of accumulated plastic waste. Globally, the number of plastic wastes going into oceans is set to quadruple between 2020 and 2050, which mean the ocean could contain more plastic by quantity than the marine life by mid-century.

Moving on to the causes of plastic waste, as we're all aware, China had banned the import of plastic since 2017 and disappointedly Malaysia began to buy discarded plastic from China's exporter including US, UK and Australia by importing more than 700,000 tonnes of plastic waste. There's an illegal recycling factory in Jenjarom who seized the opportunity to get rid of the waste. It also became a giant landfill because of piles of plastic there.

From the main cause above, it's somehow related to the next factor which is both legal and illegal waste recycling factories have started developing all over Malaysia. There're 33 illicit factories in Kuala Langat where the district Jenjarom is located in. Most of these illicit factories used to dispose of plastic in a 'cheaper' way either they'll buried or burned scraps. According to The Star (2019), the residence who lived nearby are having much issues such as stinky smell, sound pollution and toxic air everywhere. They had to face various types of illness such as blood cough, pneumonia, rashes and so much more. However, we acknowledge that Malaysia's expanding plastic industry are one of the sources of income for our country.

Afterwards, the Malaysian's attitude of treating the nature especially on plastic waste might be the factors of this situation happened. We could proof this statement just by looking at the condition of Sungai Klang where there are clogs of rubbish everywhere especially plastic waste. As a matter of fact, we Malaysians have been throwing our own waste into drains, rivers, empty plots of land and the worst one is the sea where all the marines been dying these days because of the plastic waste.

In order to overcome this issue, government should take action in order to educate Malaysians and wipe out the issues gradually. Malaysia's Federal Territories Ministry ought to reduce the plastic recycling industry or limiting the plastic waste that had been imported by other countries such as, (Athur,2018) United States who sent 178,238 tons of plastic waste between January and July. What is mean by reducing is to shut down all the illicit recycling factories who always use illegal ways to compose the plastic waste instead of doing it in the right way. (Zulkarnain,2018) At this point in time, the government has uncovered 97 illicit factories including 15 in Selangor including Jenjarom district and 10 in Johor Bharu and some were instantly shut down. By performing this method, I do believe that we could overhaul the ranking of being one of the worst countries for plastic waste and being called as "trash can".

Subsequently, the implementation of a plastic straw and single-use plastic ban all over the country by government somehow educate fellow citizens on how important is to reduce plastic waste. There's a lot of awareness campaign on the consequences of single-use plastic straws can be conducted throughout the year, so that the ban is fully enforced on licensed traders and food operators. (Siraj,2019) This policy expected to help the government tackle environmental pollution, which is becoming more serious, as well as promote recycling. Local authorities should monitor the implementation of the policy periodically to ensure its effectiveness. Due to the fact that, malls and food operators play as an important role in order to support the awareness effectively. Undoubtedly, marine creatures at the present time endangered by the irresponsible party who likely dumping the waste into the ocean instead of recycled it in right ways. As we know, turtle one of the endangered animals because they used to eat plastic waste. (Geof,12) It is estimated that there are around 150 million tonnes of plastic in the oceans today. Thus, this resolution somehow could help people nowadays to realize how important is to reduce and ban single-use plastic, so that they could practicing to use recycled goods in future.

Lastly, I do urged Malaysians to use recycled products in order to control plastic waste issues. At this point in time, we could see, there are many recycling products that has been offered by most of the retailers. For example, paper straw that has been used by most of the beverage outlets, recycled padding shoes and recycled paper bags. Furthermore, according to Ipsos, Malaysians prefer recycling things over reuse or avoiding plastic altogether, so that by using this method, we could reduce single-plastic use by Malaysians so that they don't have to reuse several things such as plastic straw because it's gross to use it back instead of threw it away. The study revealed that more than half of Malaysians (68%) are concerned about the single-plastic use. In that case, by putting this kind of products in the market somehow attract some Malaysians to support it.

(Sophie,2018) In order to prevent more plastic in the ocean than fish by 2050, the fight against plastic waste starts with individual action. Well, there are some simple steps to seriously reduce plastic waste immediately. As a smart consumer, we should drink our coffee from a reusable cup because, over 500 billion single-use coffee cups are thrown away each year. Consumer should know that a single coffee cup took years to fully decomposed. Moreover, instead of using plastic bag, we should have a reusable shopping bag which could diminish more than 300 billion plastic bags per year. Next, for a chewing gum lover, they should know that plastic-free chewing gum do exist. This is because, according to UK charity Just One Ocean, the gum itself mostly plastic and adds up to 100000 tons of pollution every year. Thus, it's proven that there're so many ways for ourselves lessen the plastic waste instead of put a blame on one side party.

From this beneficial case study, I have some self-reflection on how important to be a responsible Malaysian in order to cut down single-use plastic on my daily basis. Somehow, I do realize that I used to ignore this kind of awareness due to the fact that I felt like plastic is one of the convenient things that every food industry should have. According to the book written by Geof Knight, Plastic Pollution, there are so many things effected by the uncontrollable plastic waste including air pollution and some dangerous disease. It somehow opened my eyes on how crucial this issue is. Nevertheless, the ignorance somehow could kill other nature. That's the reason why I chose this topic in order to make people especially Malaysians realized on how worst our country in plastic waste so that I could spread the

awareness about this issue and educate people to be more responsible in taking care of their own waste instead of depend on other party to make things out. There're might be more causes than I've provided that we don't even realize, in that case, I do hope that my proposal for the resolution somehow helps to overcome the issue even if with the minor results because small things might give a big impact. My last sentence would be, let us handle this issue together in order to have a better future for our nature so that our next generation could explore and have the experience to see the nature that being guarded by us instead of undergo a nation just like the Wall-E movie where our land filled by trash and scraps because of our ignorance to reduce the single use plastic. In conclusion, plastic waste is one of the issues that should be concern by the ministry of Malaysia and also fellow citizens so that we could fight the consequences with a better resolutions.

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