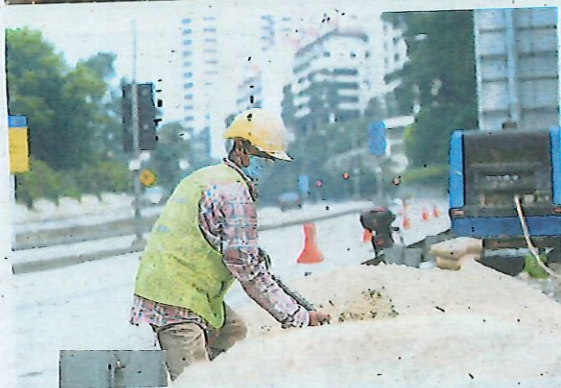


# Haze is not stopping field work, yet

The show must go on, say Malaysians who have to work outdoors



Call of duty: Nooruddin putting out the fire at Jalan Camar in Kuching earlier this month.



Like any other day: A construction worker going about his usual routine during the haze.



Keeping safe: A worker wearing a face mask while cutting grass near the Sungai Buloh Highway.

**KUCHING:** For Malaysians who have to work outdoors, it is a case of "the show must go on" despite the haze.

"Like it or not, we have to help the people. It's our role and responsibility to put out fires," said fireman Nooruddin Ismail, 57.

"And we appreciate the support shown by the community. Many people brought us food and drinks when we were fighting the Jalan Camar fire," he said, referring to the recent blaze at Jalan Camar in Petra Jaya which took over a week to put out, including five days of 24-hour operations.

"The Jalan Camar fire involved a total area of about 23ha. It occurred on peat soil, which made it difficult to put out because the fire burns underground.

"We needed to flood the area so that the fire would not keep spreading. On top of that, it was hazy and our visibility was affected, especially at night," he said.

Although the Jalan Camar operation ended on Sept 11, he said firefighters were continuing to monitor

the area in case fire broke out again.

To Nooruddin, the call of duty must not be ignored even in the current hazy conditions.

Based at the Petra Jaya fire and rescue station here, he and his colleagues have been battling wildfires around Kuching since the haze struck early this month.

In **GEORGE TOWN**, Penang Island City Council general workers are going about their daily tasks amidst the haze.

Mohamad Ismadi Israk, 27, is one of them and he spends four hours sweeping and cleaning the roads.

"The only thing we can do is to make sure that we wear masks, as we are outdoors.

"There were times when we would skip the masks too. We sweat easily and with the masks on, it is uncomfortable.

"But we feel suffocated by the haze if we do not wear it," he said when met in Jalan Sungai here yesterday.

Kuih and fruit seller Ahmad Izan Latip, 44, and his family skipped the masks while operating their stall

near the Air Itam roundabout.

"It's very uncomfortable to have the masks on because it's very hot out here. The masks make us feel even warmer," he said yesterday.

In **PETALING JAYA**, food delivery riders such as Akmal Aminuddin, 24, and Wan Mohd Azrul Jamaluddin, 28, are continuing with their job as usual.

But they take extra precaution to avoid being sick.

"I work as usual during the haze, but I drink more water so that I stay hydrated," Akmal said when met at Devi's Corner in Bangsar.

He said that he also wears his N95 mask at all times.

"A few days ago, I forgot to put on my mask. It was a customer who

reminded me to put on the mask so I don't fall ill," he added.

Wan Mohd Azrul said that many customers had shown concern for riders like him.

"There are some who even tip more as a gesture of appreciation," he said.

Grab Malaysia head of operations Rashid Shukor said that the company had seen a daily uptick in delivery orders since the haze started.

Due to this, its delivery riders were given masks and water to ensure that they stay healthy.

"Since the haze started, we began giving out surgical masks but as the condition worsened, we've started working with selected merchants and our Grab Driver Pit Stop part-

ners to provide N95 masks and water daily to our two-wheel partners (riders)," said Rashid in a statement.

Among the pit stops are The Port in Bandar Utama and Devi's Corner in Bangsar.

Another food delivery company, foodpanda Malaysia, said the company was distributing masks to its riders.

As for construction workers, it is work as usual.

Bangladeshi Jamal Martuba, 42, felt that the haze did not affect his work.

"I put on a mask and then I start work. It feels like just any other day," said Jamal, who has been in Malaysia for three years.