

# Jastre to find ways to reduce plastic bags use



Development Minister Pehin Dato Hj Suyoi (R), hands out reusable bags to the public during his outing to shopping centres to monitor the 'No Plastic Bag' initiative. Picture: BT/Syed Rory Malai Hassan

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THE Ministry of Development through the Department of Environment, Parks and Recreation (Jastre) will be looking into every possible method, style or action available in their efforts to cut down the nation's use of plastic bags.

At the moment the department under the ministry is mulling over the idea of extending the 'No Plastic Bag Weekend' to include weekdays based on the positive outcome of the initial drive.

The ministry hopes to completely remove the public's preference for plastic shopping bags, however it may take some time to do so as plastic bags have been part and parcel of everyday life, said the Minister of Development Pehin Orang Kaya Indera Pahlawan Dato Seri Setia Hj Suyoi Hj Osman yesterday.

The minister, who was handing out reusable bags to customers in several shopping centres in Belait and Tutong yesterday said that in order to achieve that target, the department is also

looking to introduce more initiatives on reducing public use of plastic bags by examining the practices carried out in other countries.

"We will gradually introduce whatever method we think is suitable to the public so that we can all benefit from the results," the minister said.

As far as asking customers to pay for each plastic bag that they require or having shops completely drop plastic bags altogether, these measures at such an early stage of our environmentally friendly initiative may be a bit too harsh for the public to accept, the minister added.

Tay Eng Hwa, senior retail manager for Supasave, during the minister's visit to the outlet in Panaga, Seria said that the overall response from the public has been very positive with many hoping for the initiative to be continued further on.

He said that in their efforts to assist the ministry with the initiative, Supasave has also been offering their customers their own brand of reusable bags at a very affordable price.

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