



PEMA workshop participants with trainers from the Fire and Rescue Department.

Emergency response training at POIC Lahad Datu

LAHAD DATU: Be prepared - that's the message to 46 participants in an emergency response training here conducted by the Fire and Rescue Department.

The training was conducted under the POIC Emergency Mutual Aid (PEMA) programme by POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd in collaboration with the investor community at the Lahad Datu palm oil industrial cluster (POIC Lahad Datu) here.

The participants had in August this year gone through two days of introductory training in responding to emergencies. The one-day level two training last Monday exposed them to practical aspects of emergency response, firefighting and first aid.

"The participating companies have different procedures and have different levels of sophistication in their preparedness for emergencies.

"Our purpose is to equip the participants with the basics like how to use a stretcher, how to move an

injured person to a safe spot, so that they can become life-saving early responders to emergencies and are able to help each other before medics and fire and rescue personnels arrive," said Sahidi Mahali, the head of fire safety of the Fire and Rescue Department in Tawau who oversaw the training.

Sahidi said he was pleased with the enthusiasm of the participants whose routine duties were mostly not connected to safety and health.

"We want to prepare them mentally to face emergencies and possess the skills to do so."

POIC Lahad Datu, set up in 2005 and has more than 40 investors with investments valued in excess of RM4 billion, initiated PEMA in 2014 to promote collective responsibility among its investor community and promote competence and awareness in dealing with emergencies.

Signatories to PEMA pledged their resources for use in

emergencies. They include major refinery companies Mewah Datu and Genting Biodiesel Sdn Bhd.

The state-owned POIC Lahad Datu covers more than 4,000 acres with about 2,000 developed. It is a one-of-a-kind industrial park aimed specifically at developing palm oil and biomass-based downstream industries. It is an important component of the Sabah Development Corridor blueprint and the National Biomass Strategy.

It was recently declared as one of Malaysia's palm oil green economic zones (POGEZ) by the Ministry of Plantation Industries and Commodities.

POGEZ is an initiative of the proposed Council of Palm Oil Producing Countries which is a joint initiative of Malaysia and Indonesia. The two countries produce about 85% of the world's crude palm oil.