



PEMA members going through a drill that tested their fitness at the fitness event at POIC Lahad Datu on Wednesday.

Keep fit to serve, first responders told

KOTA KINABALU: First responders, even those who are volunteers, must maintain a good level of fitness to be able to function effectively in emergencies.

"Being fit is also important for the volunteers' own good and ensure their ability to put into practice what they have learnt, and that they do not handicap the functioning of the team," said Sumsua Bin Rashid, head of Lahad Datu Fire Station.

He said this when launching the fifth Fitness Day on Wednesday for volunteers of the POIC Emergency Management (PEMA), a volunteer group of first responders comprising POIC staff and employees of investor companies at the POIC Lahad Datu industrial park.

Sumsua said that while fitness in general should be part of a person's daily life, it can have critical consequences in life-and-

death situations such as industrial plant accidents or chemical spills.

"This PEMA event is to remind us that we owe it to ourselves to make fitness our lifestyle," he told 150 participants at the Lahad Datu marine field.

PEMA was initiated in 2014 by POIC Sabah Sdn Bhd, the developer of the POIC Lahad Datu industrial park and POIC Lahad Datu Port operator. About 2,000 people are employed by a myriad of businesses from the port, fertiliser plants, palm oil refineries, biodiesel factories, logistics and port operator.

The PEMA fitness day was last held in 2018. It was halted due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Fire, Search and Rescue Department (Bomba) is the main source of training, advisory and knowledge sources for PEMA. Its personnel have been conducting regular training for PEMA members, conducting drills and participating

in CSR activities, such as blood donation, under the auspices of PEMA. POIC Sabah Head of Corporate Communications, Malvina Flant, who represented POIC at the event, acknowledged the indispensable role of Bomba since PEMA began.

"Thanks to you and your colleagues, our goal of creating a mechanism for self-help for all and by all at POIC Lahad Datu is now a working reality," she said to the Bomba chief and his men present.

She also echoed Sumsua's call for wider fitness discipline, adding that a good volunteer corp of first responders bode well to the reputation of POIC Lahad Datu as a trustworthy and progressive industrial park. The day's activity included a competition amongst the PEMA member companies and Bomba in a fitness battle to finish the fastest time and tug of war.