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Penang Goes Orange 2024 @ UiTM: A United Stand Against Online Gender-Based Violence

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On 7 December 2024, the Penang Goes Orange 2024 (PGO2024) campaign was held at Dewan Besar, Universiti Teknologi MARA Penang Branch (UiTM CPP), Permatang Pauh Campus, marking a significant milestone in the 11-year history of this initiative by the Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC), dedicated to combating gender-based violence. Under the theme #Swipe2Stop, this year's campaign focuses on addressing online sexual harassment, particularly among youth, through advocacy, awareness, and action.

Media Launch at KOMTAR

The campaign kicked off with a media conference held at the Kompleks Tun Abdul Razak (KOMTAR), Penang on 18 November 2024, led by YB Puan Lim Siew Khim, Penang State EXCO for Social Development, Welfare, and Non-Islamic Religious Affairs. The event officially announced the PGO2024 campaign, highlighting its goals, partners, and key programs.

Joining the conference were YB Tuan Daniel Gooi Zi Sen, EXCO for Youth, Sports, and Health, and YBhg. Datu' Ong Bee Leng, Chief Executive Officer of the Penang Women's Development Corporation (PWDC).

Their speeches reaffirmed Penang's commitment to eliminating gender-based violence and fostering a safer digital environment.

The event also saw the participation of other key stakeholders, including YB Tuan Jason H'ng Mooi Lye, EXCO for Local Government and Urban and Rural Planning, YB Puan Connie Tan Hooi Peng, ADUN Seri Delima, and representatives from strategic partners like UiTM CPP, Digital Penang, PYDC, and corporate sponsors including Flextronics Technology Penang Sdn. Bhd and IPK College.



A PWDC-UiTM Collaborative Effort

For the first time, UiTM CPP served as the official host and joint collaborator of PGO2024. The main organising team from UiTM was led by The Office of Industry, Community and Alumni Network (ICAN), with project manager, Noor Azli Affendy Lee from the Academy of Language Studies (APB), taking the reins, with the support of several fellow APB lecturers and other staff from other departments and faculties. The Student Affairs Department also played a pivotal role in aiding with the student volunteers and participants for the event.

The morning session on 7 December at Dewan Besar featured our own UiTM CPP students as emcees, guided by English lecturer Nazima Versay Kudus, showcasing their professional hosting skills. The forum session, titled “Shared Responsibility: Combating Online Violence”, was moderated by English lecturer Fasyin Diyana Mohamad Fadzil, fostering an engaging and thought-provoking discussion. The forum featured expert panellists from law enforcement, regulatory bodies, and advocacy organizations:

- Superintendent Hirdawati Isa – D11 Investigation of Children, Criminal Investigation Department, Bukit Aman.
- Tuan Mohd Rashdi Hasan – Head of Regulatory Supervision, Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), Penang.
- Puan Salma Farhanah A. Rasid – Service Coordinator, Women’s Centre for Change (WCC), Penang.

Each panellist shared valuable insights into combating online violence, addressing legal measures, and providing victim support services. Their perspectives emphasized the importance of collective action from government agencies, tech regulators, and civil society organizations.

In addition to an engaging forum session, the event was also attended by official partners of both PWDC and UiTM, from companies like Dandy, Yayasan Restu, CelcomDigi, Yayasan Waqaf Pendidikan Anak Yatim atau Miskin (YAWATIM), Switch and several others. Several fascinating booths by these partners provided special services such as food demonstrations (Dandy), create-your-own-stamp station (Pos Malaysia), and Arabic khat calligraphy (Yayasan Restu).

A Memorable Event Launch

The PGO2024 was officiated by YB Puan Lim Siew Khim, together with Associate Professor Ts. Dr. Kay Dora Abd Ghani, Deputy Rector of Research, Industry, Community & Alumni, representing UiTM CPP’s Rector, Professor Dato’ Ir. Dr. Haji Ahmad Rashidy Razali. Other distinguished guests included YB Puan Phee Syn Tze, YBhg. Dato’ Hajjah Aida Haji Yusof Rawo, and YBhg. Dato’ Ong Bee Leng, alongside PWDC board members, sponsors, and strategic partners.

During her keynote speech, YB Puan Lim Siew Khim shared key survey findings from PWDC in collaboration with Digital Penang and Penang Institute:

- 51.9% of young women and 47.1% of young men reported experiencing online sexual harassment.
- 60.5% of victims remained silent after being harassed.
- 95.2% were unaware of support organizations available to help victims.
- The data underscores the urgency of addressing online sexual harassment through campaigns like PGO2024.



First-Time AR-Powered Digital Explorace

A groundbreaking feature of PGO2024 was the introduction of the Augmented Reality (AR) Digital Explorace, developed by Digital Penang. This innovative activity took participants on an interactive journey to raise awareness about online sexual harassment through immersive tasks and challenges.

The Explorace saw participation from youths, including UiTM CPP clubs, UiTM Pre-Diploma Program (PPT), and UiTM alumni, whose team won the AR Explorace Orange Challenge. Eight stations were positioned in various locations in UiTM CPP, with various partners in-charge of manning the stations such as Women’s Centre for Change (WCC), Majlis Belia Pulau Pinang, Persatuan Wanita UiTM CPP (PEWANI), Flex, as well as UiTM CPP student volunteers. Digital Penang facilitated the AR system throughout the challenge to solve any technical problems.



Looking Ahead with #Swipe2Stop

Penang Goes Orange 2024 successfully rolled over 800 participants, including students, alumni, government officials, and local communities, in a shared mission to combat online violence. The event concluded with a prize-giving ceremony for the AR Explorace winners and lucky draws.

As Penang Goes Orange 2024 unfolds through its 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence, the campaign urges everyone to support the #Swipe2Stop movement. Together, we can create safer, more inclusive, and respectful digital spaces for all.

