

# Essay on Life in The City

A city is a place where many people live, work and play in. Kuala Lumpur is the biggest city in Malaysia. To accommodate all these people; skyscrapers and super-highways are built. So K.L. (as Kuala Lumpur is popularly known) is mainly made of concrete and mortar. Some trees are grown to provide greenery and shade but they are few compared to the thousands of buildings that stretch as far as the eye can see.

For most people working in K, L., the daily task of going to work and coming home from work is a much practiced and tolerated routine. Often the roads are jammed with cars. All it needs is an accident occurring on the road and the traffic jam will get intolerable. It makes the difference between reaching the office on time or an hour late. Also, the heat of the tropical sun does no good for the commuter's frayed nerves. The more fortunate ones travel in air-conditioned cars while the majority have to make do with riding motorcycles, squeezing into buses, mini or otherwise, or taxis.

Lunch, for most office workers, is a quick one at the most convenient shop or stall near where they work. So, come lunch hour, hordes of workers stream out of their offices into the streets. They all have one objective in mind and that is to fill their empty stomach. So, men with ties and without ties head for their favorite eating-stall as quickly as possible before the food is sold-out. Women in costumes of all sorts likewise do the same thing. The variety of food - available, for one thing, is plentiful. The price, however, makes one think about how cheap food is in a small town.

In that one hour or so for lunch-break, there are some workers who can squeeze in a bit of shopping too. So the shopping complexes and other shops are filled to the brim with people spending their hard-

earned money on necessities and luxuries, whichever they can afford.

Besides these office workers, there are hawkers, taxi-drivers, roadside barbers, pavement artists, businessmen, policemen, con-men, crooks, and their victims all going about making their living in the city. Some of them do good business and make a great deal of money while some are not so fortunate. Practically all of them seem to be busy. Life is a hurry. It is a never-ending pursuit of money to make ends meet, or to buy a most coveted product or to put into the bank.

In the daytime, one sees so many people concentrated in the city's skyscrapers, on the buses. on the streets and in the shops. Cars crawl along the congested roads. The parking bays are always full. Parking attendants wait patiently for the next victim who forgets to feed the parking meter.

Foul-smelling Kiang River flows quietly through the hear of Kuala Lumpur.

When night comes, Kuala Lumpur becomes alive in a different way. The night-clubs, karaoke lounges, snooker parlors and massage parlors open for business. These places are never short of patrons who arrive to release some of the tensions built up during the day. These nocturnal activities go on deep into the night. There are some that only cease when dawn comes. However behind all these activities are the less active people who sleep behind locked doors, fearful of the many criminals that haunt the city. It is not a wise thing to walk about alone on the streets at night. Only a fool or a crook might want to do that. Robberies and murders are common events that occur in the city.

Busy it may be on ordinary days, Kuala Lumpur-becomes a ghost town when. Hari Raya. Puasa or the Chinese New Year comes. It is evident

then that most people who work in Kuala Lumpur are from outside the city. So come festival holidays, they head for their home towns, leaving behind a massive concrete jungle with empty buildings and silent highways. What a contrast it is to the normal hustle and bustle! So for a few days, there is peace and quiet in the city. It feels as though a giant is sleeping and recuperating from the hectic activity of normal days. Then all too soon the workers come back, reinforced and ready to make K.L. wake up from its slumber once again.

Thus life in the city goes on, hectic and fast, filled with excitement and struggle, hopes and dreams.