

## **Push for recycling, not incinerator**

*Ng Tze Yeng, published 15 August 2006 in [Malaysiakini](#)*

I refer to your report Broga incinerator: It's over, says paper.

We Malaysians only recycle 3% of our rubbish compared to the global standard of 30%. Frankly, it's a material management issue. A lot of our rubbish can be recycled so why can't we look at that and more importantly, how we consume? Some suggestions:

People will recycle only if they can see direct benefits for themselves. Ever wondered why the 'old newspaper man' is such a great model? He comes to your house and gives you money, however little, for recycling. Let's extend it to glass, plastic and cans.

Make it mandatory for all hypermarkets to have a recycling section that will give people money for bringing in their recyclable items.

Allow shops and hawkers to start charging for packaging - ie, plastic bags to cost an extra 10 sen more and takeaway food to cost 30 sen more for example. People will then consciously refuse plastics by bringing their own packaging or containers.

We should re-look at how we measure progress and development as a nation. Why are we so obsessed with purchasing material goods as a measure of 'having made it'?

We also have to look at how to manage household waste to become compost as well.

The minister for housing and local government should stop having short-term solutions that are detrimental in the long run. The Broga incinerator, for example, didn't make sense. If incinerators are so safe, why is there so much protest in Japan, a society which welcomes new technology?