

Police Have Right To Check Mobile Phones

POLICE personnel can inspect mobile phones belonging to individuals to ensure there are no forms of communications that are obscene, offensive, or threatening to the security of the people and nation, the Dewan Rakyat was told.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Mohd Azis Jamman said the matter

was allowed to maintain public order in accordance with the provisions under Section 233 of the Communications and Multimedia Act 1998.

"However, the public should be aware of their rights during a random check, including requesting the identity of the police officer conducting the search for record purposes, in case there is a breach of the standard operating procedures (SOP)," he said when replying a question by Chan Ming Kai (PH-Alor Setar).

Chan wanted to know if there were any reports of SOP violations against police personnel while inspecting the mobile phones of members of the public.

Azis said if an individual felt the police personnel had violated any SOP, they



could report it to the nearest police station or at Bukit Aman.

Meanwhile, Azis said police would use any means including 'phone bugging' or 'tapping' to ensure investigations could be carried out in cases involving security.

"It does not matter if the person is a politician, a businessman or just anyone who is suspected of having the potential to breach security issues and I believe the police will take the appropriate action," he said.

He said this in response to a question by Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob (BN-Bera) on whether the police were bugging or tapping the phone communications of politicians from the opposition.—BERNAMA

Plants & Gardens
Subang Jaya

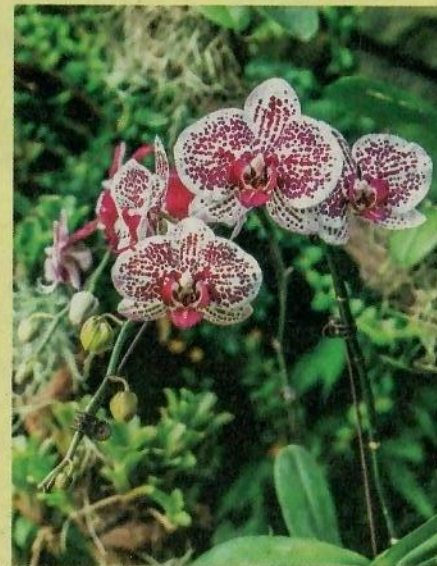


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Everyone's got a Secret Garden somewhere in the little corner of their home. Gardening has opened up new horizons for those who want to put their green fingers to good use. Starting this month, SJ Echo will be featuring useful tips on Plants & Gardens for you. You can also follow our Facebook Group: SJGardens and share your photos and stories.

Biochar for Gardeners

by Christopher Teh Boon Sung, Fac. of Agriculture, Uni. Putra Malaysia, Serdang
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able to the plants and reducing nutrient losses such as from being washed away, due to excessive water or erosion, from the soil.

It is important to remember that biochar is neither a fertilizer nor a substitute for one. Fertilizers are still needed, but applying fertilizers in soils having biochar, as mentioned earlier, will help to retain the nutrients from these fertilizers and make them more readily available for plants.

How much biochar do we need? The rates vary widely between 0.5 to 5 kg per square meter ground, depending on the soil condition and management. However, biochar, due to its recalcitrance to decomposition, is only applied once. This is unlike mulching with organic materials, which, because they will decompose over time, have to be replenished once after every few months. Biochar can be applied on the soil sur-

Fatal Accident along Persiaran Tuiuan

Persiaran Tujuan

AN accident which occurred in the wee hours of a Sunday morning last month along Persiaran Tujuan claimed the life of the driver of a sedan car.

The single vehicle accident according to Subang Jaya OCPD ACP Risikin Satiman happened around 330am while it was coming from SS19 towards USJ4.

"The driver who was alone in the

his vehicle," Risikin said, adding that the vehicle was a total wreck.

He said no witnesses to the accident had stepped forward to shed light on the incident.

Meanwhile ADUN Subang Jaya Michelle Ng who was informed of the incident said "I am very sad to be informed of the accident along Persiaran Tujuan

and wish to extend my condolences to the family. Since the last incident, MPSJ has redrawn the road lines and reinstalled fresh speedbreakers along that stretch of road, as recommended by the Malaysian Institute of Road Safety."

"I would like to urge residents to,

until further information is released by the police, to refrain from speculating. Let us respect the family of the deceased as they go through this time of grief."



vehicle died at the scene. The car hit a tree along the divider before landing on the other side of the road."

"We suspect the driver lost control of

Biochar. You might have heard of it or seen it sold, together with bags of fertilizers, lime, and other soil amendments, in plant nurseries or the gardening section in hardware stores.

What is biochar, how can we use it in our gardens, and most importantly, is it any good? Biochar looks like charcoal. This is because biochar is actually charcoal, but the former is produced differently than the latter. Biochar comprises agricultural and forest wastes (such as leaf litter, wood chips, dead plants, and other biomass), which are then burned at high temperatures (between 300 to 700 degrees Celsius) in an oxygen-depleted environment, through a process called pyrolysis.

Biochar is receiving a lot of attention lately because it serves two purposes. First, it mitigates climate change by helping to store carbon (up to 70% of biochar is carbon) in a very stable form in the soil for as long as amazingly hundreds to thousands of years, and second, it acts as a soil amendment to improve soil fertility, where the latter is of great interest to us gardeners.

Biochar is very porous, lightweight, fine-grained, and has a large surface area. It is these properties that make biochar effective in lowering soil compaction, increasing soil water retention, increasing soil microbial activities, and lowering soil acidity. More importantly, these biochar properties help to retain soil nutrients, making them more avail-

Biochar can be applied on the soil surface, or better still, mixed into the soil.

Biochar, however, is no cure-all. Research have increasingly shown that biochar seems to be most effective when they are applied to problematic soils such as degraded soils, highly acidic soils, or soils containing toxic amounts of elements (such as aluminum). On well-managed or healthy soils, however, biochar appeared to give no additional benefits.

What then is our conclusion? Adding biochar to our garden soils, even healthy, well-managed ones, will do no harm and may actually be beneficial, but biochar is most advantageous for poor quality garden soils.

