

Raging bull: smashing away anger at Indonesia's 'Temper Clinic'

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Armed with crowbars and wearing protective gear, three women assembled at a Jakarta stress clinic survey the cluster of bottles they're about to smash to pieces.

"I feel relieved. It's like something I have been holding inside is finally released when I smashed those bottles," Genta Kalbu Tanjung, a 20-year-old university student, told AFP as blaring rock music pulsated in the background.

Tanjung and her two friends paid 125,000 rupiah (\$8.85) each to unleash their pent-up rage at the Temper Clinic, which also lets clients bust up old televisions and printers for a slightly higher price.

Inside a bare smash room, one wall is covered with a written reminder: "Holding on to anger is like drinking poison and expecting the other person to die."

Aliya Dewayanti Senoajie wanted to use the students' half-hour session to channel her frustrations as a school holiday quickly comes to an end.

"The break is over—it was too short and I'm not ready to go back to school," Senoajie said, declaring her bust-it-up session a success.

"It was really fun. My adrenaline was pumping."

The clinic opened last summer in a posh Jakarta neighbourhood after co-

owner Masagus Yusuf Albar returned from an overseas holiday where he saw similar businesses sprouting up.

The first dedicated space for such destruction therapy opened in Japan in 2008, with a view to helping stressed salarymen relieve their pent up frustrations.

It has spread in popularity and temper clinics, also known as rage rooms, can be found in most key US and European cities.

The trend has taken off in Asia in the past two years with similar ventures opening in China, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

But the service might not immediately make sense for a place like Indonesia—its citizens regularly rank high among the world's least-stressed people.

That wasn't lost on Albar, who conceded that life in places like Bali or jungle-clad Sumatra was pretty relaxed.

But not so in Jakarta, a city of 10 million plus with hours-long traffic jams that can drive the most patient mad and where school and work are becoming increasingly competitive.

A 2017 survey done by dry cleaning firm Zipjet found Jakarta was one of the world's most stressful cities based on criteria including traffic, air and noise pollution and unemployment.

"Try to go anywhere on Friday night and it's very annoying. My friend once got caught in the traffic and she ended up crying. That's how bad it was," Albar told AFP.

"Customers find this cathartic," he said.

But smashing things up to let off steam is not necessarily risk free, warned Jakarta-based psychologist Liza Marielly Djaprie.

She suggested that regularly using such rooms could simply condition the body to need an aggressive release whenever tensions rise.

Djaprie explained: "I don't usually encourage patients to destroy things just so it won't become a habit. We need to learn about our anger—and anger management."

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