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A VOLUNTEER with a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in Kuala Lumpur wants people distributing food to the homeless community in the city during Ramadan to coordinate their efforts.

After spending two days in the Jalan Belia area, Mohd Radzi Jamaludin was shocked to discover the number of individuals and groups dropping off food for the homeless in the vicinity.

Between 9.30pm and 1.40am, 19 groups came to the same spot to deliver food.

"The number of food packets discarded everywhere just kept increasing, and more food was still being distributed," said the volunteer with Pustaka Jalanan, an NGO that provides street children a place to study and do their homework.

"It is obvious that the food packets were piling up uneaten on five-foot ways, but people just kept dropping food packets there," Mohd Radzi noted.

"Imagine if 15 groups give out 50 packets each night, that is 750 packets."

"In 30 days that will be 22,500 packets."

"So, please coordinate with the authorities before distributing the food," he pleaded.

He added that those who want to contribute to the needy should do the necessary research and work with NGOs to figure out a schedule as the latter would have experience in the matter.

"There are people outside Kuala

# Chew over better ways to hand out food effectively

## Volunteers encouraged to liaise with authorities and NGOs before feeding the homeless in KL to avoid wastage



Unopened food left on a road divider at Jalan Belia in Kuala Lumpur.

Lumpur who also need food and supplies, so some of the items can be sent elsewhere," Mohd Radzi highlighted.

He said he brought his friends to all the spots where people were

feeding the homeless, so that they could see what was happening at ground level.

"My friends were shocked to see the number of groups dropping off food," he said.

Uncoordinated food distributions to the homeless have resulted in lots of food being thrown and wasted in Kuala Lumpur.

"I am a Muslim, and we believe that sedekah dapat pahala, tapi kalau sedekah jadi sampah, mana ada pahala? (Giving alms will be rewarded, but if the alms become rubbish, there is no reward)."

Another volunteer, K. Shanti, said it was very sad that a lot of food was being wasted.

"If people realise that there are families outside Kuala Lumpur that need food as well, then the food can reach them too."

"We just need people to trust the system put in place by the authori-

ties," she added.

Local Agenda 21 (LA21) secretary and coordinator A. Ghani Mohamed said he was informed by NGOs distributing food that homeless folk were only taking out the protein from the food packs and discarding everything else.

"If they are picky with the food, perhaps they are getting too much to eat," he said, adding that there must be better coordination to prevent wastage.

Alam Flora contractors have reported an increase in discarded food waste inside rubbish bins, drains and the five-foot ways. And there were many unopened food packets thrown away.

Meanwhile, a Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) spokesman said those requiring food could go to Pusat Khidmat Gelandangan in Medan Tuanku and Pusat Pembelajaran Komuniti in Chow Kit.

The centres will be distributing fresh food to the needy every day at 5.30pm to 6.30pm (for *buka puasa*), 9pm to 10pm (evening tea) and 4.30am (for *sahur*).

Those wanting to drop off food to the homeless during the month of Ramadan, can notify Sheila via WhatsApp at 012-241 9029.

# Hit the brakes on carpark plan, MBSJ urged

By **EDWARD RAJENDRA**  
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SUBANG Jaya City Council (MBSJ) is urged to halt the plan of turning a 0.28ha public recreational park in Jalan Intan 2, Taman Puchong Intan in Selangor, into an open-air carpark with 107 bays.

Selangor MCA Public Complaints Bureau chief Lawrence Chiew said he received feedback from residents in the area who wanted MBSJ to withdraw the project.

"Urban planners in MBSJ must review the plan to protect existing green spaces."

"Spaces for open-air recreation are essential as residents in the neighbourhood use the park that is home to mature trees," he said.

He added that people were disappointed with MBSJ as there had been no consultation and the residents' views were not sought.

Yesterday, Save Jalan Intan 2 Recreational Park Pro-tem Committee chief S. Deva Varman explained to Chiew the need to retain the park as he joined a



Chiew (right) meeting residents at the public recreational park in Jalan Intan 2, Taman Puchong Intan. — SS KANESAN/The Star

group of residents in a peaceful gathering at Jalan Intan 2.

The gathering was aimed at persuading MBSJ to withdraw its plan to build a carpark at the recreational site.

On April 12, *StarMetro* highlighted the issue of the public park in Taman Puchong Intan being turned into an open-air carpark.

Copies of a memorandum objecting the development have been submitted to the office of MBSJ mayor Datuk Johary Anuar, Kinrara assemblyman Ng Sze Han and Subang MP Wong Chen.

Bordering the recreational park in Jalan Intan 2 of Taman Puchong Intan Phase One are Apartment Puchong Intan with 10 floors and

the Sri Naga Nageswari Alayam Hindu temple.

Across the public park are 378 single-storey terrace houses, 240 units of walk-up shophouses and Surau An-Nur.

Chiew said the public park was a much-needed green lung as the neighbourhood had a sizeable population of senior citizens while youths and children too needed a space to exercise.

He agreed with the residents that the park also helped to retain surface run-off and curb flash floods.

"I am against MBSJ wanting to convert the park into a parking lot covered with asphalt as it will affect rainwater flow."

"It will be wise for MBSJ to shelve this project," he said.

Chiew urged Ng as the local elected representative to respond to the people's plight and ensure that the green space was retained for recreational activities.

"Ng, who is also Selangor local government committee chairman, should discuss the matter with

MBSJ to protect a two-decade-old park and provide an alternative site for parking if it is truly needed," he added.

Chiew said the development of the recreational field would contradict a 1993 Selangor Land and Mines Department circular which made it clear that such development should be rejected without being brought to the Selangor State Executive Council meetings.

When contacted, Ng said the carpark was to cater to Puchong Intan apartment dwellers.

He explained that the open space nearby where residents used to park would be used to build another apartment complex.

"MBSJ has met the apartment residents and the complainants to get their feedback," he said.

Resident Zaukefi Ahmad, 64, said there were health benefits to be reaped from green spaces, so there was a need to keep such areas intact.

"It is a beautiful field that people in the area use for walks and engage with others," he said.

# Glad to smell roses after playground and drain upgrade in Taman Setapak

By **JAROD LIM**  
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TAMAN Setapak residents are happy that the playground along Jalan Sampadi and a nearby stinky drain have been upgraded by Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL).

Resident Abdul Rashid VM Mohamed Eusoff said he made numerous complaints to DBKL previously but did not receive any response at that time.

"My house is located next to the playground and when rowdy motorcyclists enter the playground with their bikes at night,

they disturb my sleep.

"The drain beside my house had also given way, disrupting water flow and as a result, foul stench would emit from the drain," he said.

Wangsa Maju MP Datin Paduka Dr Tan Yee Kew's special assistant Andre Lai visited the playground and inspected the collapsed drains in February with Abdul Rashid before highlighting the matter to DBKL.

"DBKL started rebuilding the drain last month, so that water could flow properly."

"DBKL's Landscape Department

also reinstalled new railings at the playground," said Lai.

He had also urged DBKL to upgrade the playground and add facilities.

"Its railing and facilities were damaged by irresponsible users."

"Some motorcyclists took advantage of the damaged railings and entered the place with their bikes," he added.

Lai said said the housing area was about 50 years old, but the playground's facilities might be overlooked because of its obscure location at the Jalan Cengal Selatan-Jalan Sampadi junction.



The damaged drain in Jalan Sampadi, Taman Setapak was rectified by DBKL last month.