

16 JUL 1998

Law-Sprinkler

OUTDOOR WATER SPRINKLER COMPULSORY ON CITY HIGHRISES

KUALA LUMPUR, July 16 (Bernama) -- The Cabinet has directed Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to amend existing legislation to make it compulsory for all tall buildings to have outdoor water sprinklers, Science, Technology and Environment Minister Datuk Law Hieng Ding said today.

This followed poor response from building owners to voluntarily instal such sprinklers which could help reduce haze.

"DBKL was asked to amend the laws as soon as possible so that all tall buildings will have the sprinklers before the Commonwealth Games," he told reporters after launching the "Dr Ranjeet Bhagwan Singh Medical Research Fund" here.

The use of the outdoor water sprinklers, in the form of water jets and water curtains, was recommended after several studies by the ministry showed that it was effective in clearing the air for up to 20 minutes after it was sprayed.

Law said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had also asked the ministry to do a study on mobile air purifier made by a German company and compare it with locally-made ones.

At present, two locally-made static air purifiers have been installed at the Puduraya bus terminal and Petaling Jaya to reduce smoke emission and dust.

Law said an initial study on the two purifiers, jointly-developed by the Malaysia Electric Corporation Bhd (MEC) and Sirim Berhad, showed positive results in reducing certain pollutants especially suspended particles.

He said the German air purifier would cost more but was quite advanced because it uses "jet technology" where air was sucked and purified through jet turbines.

Earlier in his speech Law said there was ample scope for medical research in the country since tropical diseases such as malaria and dengue would continue to be a problem in tropical countries like Malaysia.

"There are always going to be new challenges in this field simply because as the population pressure increases, we will encroach into areas that harbour these diseases," he said.

At the ceremony, Law also presented Dr Ranjeet grants to University of Malaya Master medical lecturer Dr Hoh Hon Bing and student Liam Lay Hoong of the same university.

Dr Hoh who is doing a study on eye disease received a RM14,000 grant while Liam who is pursuing a study on human DNA types in Malaysia received RM29,000.

The late Dr Ranjeet, a former IMR director, left some of his assets to establish the fund to finance studies on medical and scientific research.

-- BERNAMA

HJ AAM