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Fuming over non-existent services

Stephen Ng

K.L. Seow has lived in Taman Kepong for nearly 20 years, but he hardly sees Alam Flora workers cleaning up the public drains in his area.

"Since when have they been cleaning the drain in front of my house?" he asked, when told that Alam Flora was sending its workers to the housing estate for cleaning and maintenance services.

"This is evidence that Alam Flora has not been doing a proper job of maintaining the public drains," he said, pointing to a nearby drain which was choked with weeds.

Last week, Alam Flora workers were seen clearing the public drains in Jalan Development. According to passers-by, the drains were clogged up with rubbish for nearly half-a-year.

Only when residents complained last week did Alam Flora decided to send special trucks and teams of workers to spruce up the area.

Seow said the public drains in the housing estate were hardly maintained.

"This is not satisfactory," he said. "Look at the drains and you will understand immediately why residents are angry."

Three years have barely passed since Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad lashed out at the lack of cleanliness in certain parts of the city. Things, however, have shown little improvement in places like Taman Kepong.

Taman Kepong residents claimed that Alam Flora had only assigned three workers to clean up the drains in the housing estate.

Alam Flora managing director Mohd Siraj Mohd Razack declined to comment on this when questioned.

"If we have to clean up all the public drains in the Klang Valley, we will need to have at least 6,000 workers," he said. "And, it would take six months for each cycle to take place."

He said residents were also to be blamed for throwing rubbish into the drains. "Why are residents throwing rubbish into their own drains?" he asked.

Resident Lee Moi of Jalan Tiga also pointed to the neglect by City Hall and Alam Flora in Taman Kepong.

"As residents, we would know better than to throw rubbish into our drains. The rubbish usually comes from hawkers and restaurants," she said.

Lee said Alam Flora should not pass the buck to residents and continue to show indifference to cleanliness in the area.

Another resident, who only wanted to be identified as Cheong, said Alam Flora's job was to keep the drains and housing estate clean.

"They should not complain that they do not have the manpower or the money to carry out the task. Otherwise, there is no difference between privatisation and when City Hall was still responsible for waste management."

Cheong also urged City Hall to re-install streetlights at certain junctions, beautify road shoulders along Jalan Taman Kepong, and cover public drains along Jalan Development.

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