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Mayor: KL is not neglected

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datuk Bandar Tan Sri Kamaruzzaman Shariff said the city has not been neglected despite no longer being the country's main administrative centre.

He said Kuala Lumpur did not have to compete with the new federal administrative centre of Putrajaya as it is still the capital city.

In fact, he said, both cities complemented each other - one as the federal capital and the other the administration's nerve centre.

"It is true Government administration has shifted to Putrajaya but Kuala Lumpur is still the capital city. It now plays the role of the country's commercial and financial centre."

He dismissed perceptions that Kuala Lumpur was being neglected and receiving less attention from the Government.

He told the New Sunday Times that there was no need to create a new image for Kuala Lumpur to rival Putrajaya. (Full interview on P23 and 25).

"We exist next to each other. A journey between the two places takes less than 30 minutes, what with the good roads and communication system. Also, the city, like Putrajaya, forms part of the Multimedia Super Corridor."

The mayor brushed aside claims that the city had become dirtier, with Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad no longer residing in the city being one of the reasons why less attention was given to cleanliness.

Kamaruzzaman said the city centre was clean, adding that feedback received showed the people had recognised the change.

However, he said, it could not be denied that the level of cleanliness in some areas was still wanting.

"It depends on enforcement and our ability to supervise work done by Alam Flora, the company given the job to keep the city clean."

The mayor said one major headache for City Hall was vandalism, which caused millions of ringgit in losses every year.

However, he was confident the menace would be reduced once a new legislation under which offenders would be required to perform community service came into force.

"The legislation is being formulated by the Housing and Local Government Ministry. The Singapore experience showed that such legislation was effective in dealing with vandals and destroyers of public properties."

As rapid development took place in the city, he lamented that civic consciousness was still lacking. One indicator of this was the huge amount collected in fines.

"I am embarrassed that City Hall continues to collect huge fines from the public for committing various offences. We need a change in public attitude."

At one time, RM8.5 million was collected.

On observations that he was not accessible, Kamaruzzaman said this was far from the truth. "I am easily accessible. I meet lots of people everyday, from politicians and developers to resident associations and ordinary people."

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