

Better solid waste services once bills passed

NST- 13/6/2007

PUTRAJAYA: Draft legislation that promises better solid waste management will be tabled at the next parliament session, the deputy prime minister said.

Datuk Seri Najib Razak said two new bills — the Solid Waste Management and Public Clean-up Bill and Solid Waste Management Corporation Bill — would provide for more systematic and effective waste disposal.

“The country’s solid waste management is an important matter and needs to be managed in the best possible way.

“It is a matter of public concern, and services rendered at the local authority level need to be improved,” he said after chairing the

Cabinet Committee on Solid Waste Management and Environment meeting.

Along with the bills, the interim agreements between concessionaires of solid waste management facilities, which were arranged under the national privatisation of solid waste management programme, would be turned into concession agreements.

However, once this was done, the concessionaires would be subjected to strict key performance index and have to meet standards set by the government.

The concessionaires include Southern Waste Management Sdn Bhd, which manages the storage, collection, transfer, hauling, inter-

mediate processing and disposal of rubbish in the southern region of the peninsula (Johor, Malacca and Negri Sembilan) and Alam Flora Sdn Bhd, which provides solid waste management services for Selangor, Pahang, Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya.

The change in status was to enable the concessionaires to improve their services.

“They find it almost impossible to improve their services because they cannot upgrade their lorries or even employ more workers as they cannot get bank loans.

“Their services have been unsatisfactory but they cannot be entirely blamed as they were not operating under a formal agree-

ment,” he said.

A meeting among the local councils on the bills would be held on June 22. Local authorities spend about RM854 million, or 60 per cent, of their annual budget on waste disposal services.

Najib also said the proposed Solid Waste Management Corporation would be placed under the purview of the Housing and Local Government Ministry.

The committee agreed that issues surrounding the 680ha Bukit Tagar landfill, situated 50km from Kuala Lumpur, should be addressed speedily.

The landfill, he said, would ease the solid waste problem in the Federal Territory and Selangor.