

Improve management to curb dengue

DENGUE cases are on the rise in the country. Every day we hear news about the number of people infected with dengue. It was even reported in the media that dengue cases in Selangor spiked by 338 per cent, with 29,972 cases recorded between January and July this year, compared with only 6,842 cases for the same period last year.

The number of dengue cases nationwide was almost 60,000 cases from January to July this year, compared with only 15,400 cases for the same period last year.

Many preventive and control measures have been carried out, such as chemical fogging to kill the mosquito which carries the dengue virus, strong legal enforcement, creating public awareness on the need to have clean surroundings

and others.

Sadly, the number of dengue cases are still on the rise. The Health director-general said among the factors for the increase was the poor management of solid waste.

Waste management is a crucial area related to the economic status of a country and the lifestyle of its population. Solid waste management can be defined as a discipline associated with the control of generation, storage, collection, transfer and transport, processing and disposal of solid wastes.

Despite the aggressive economic development in Malaysia, solid

waste management is relatively poor. Because of this, the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Act 2007 (Act 672) was approved by Parliament on July 17, 2007, and gazetted on Aug 30, 2007, by vesting executive power to the Federal Government to implement solid waste management and public cleansing.

Act 672 establishes concrete policies, plans and strategies of solid waste management and public cleansing in the country.

Act 672 also formulates a proper plan for solid waste management, such as location, facility size, a solid waste management scheme

and duration of planning in the country as well as setting standards, specifications and codes of practice to be adopted in dealing with solid waste in the country.

The act defines solid waste as any scrap material or other unwanted surplus substance or rejected products arising from the application of any process, any substance required to be disposed of as being broken, worn out, contaminated or otherwise spoilt, or any other material that according to this act or any other written law is required by the authorities to be disposed of.

It does not include scheduled wastes as prescribed under the Environmental Quality Act 1974 [Act 127], sewage as defined in the Water Services Industry Act 2006 [Act 655] or radioactive waste as defined

in the Atomic Energy Licensing Act 1984 [Act 304].

Act 672 also focuses on recycling and has a special allocation for separation of wastes at the source. Act 672 came into force in September 2011 and is applicable throughout Peninsular Malaysia, and the Federal Territory of Putrajaya and Labuan.

However, the act is not being adopted in Selangor, Perak or Penang. With the increased number of dengue cases which might be due to poor management of solid waste, it is time for the three states to strongly consider to fully adopt and enforce the act.

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The number of dengue cases in Selangor have spiked by 338 per cent and is still rising.