

MAJLIS BANDARAYA SHAH ALAM
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More money for dengue war

Selangor to spend RM5mil in 2017 to combat mosquito-borne menace

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A STAGGERING RM5mil will be spent this year to combat the prevalence of dengue in Selangor, a more than 200% increase compared to last year's budget of RM1.5mil

Selangor State Youth Development, Sports, Cultural and Entrepreneurship Development Committee chairman Amirudin Shari said the bulk of the budget, about RM2.69mil, would go towards pest control operations in all 12 local authorities.

"A further RM1.2mil will be allocated to the councils to carry out dengue prevention activities while about RM100,000 will be spent on researching new methods and technology, such as expanding the Toxo (Toxorhynchites) mosquito programme to other areas," he said at the launch of the Selangor Aerosol Programme in Kampung

Laksamana, Selayang.

The Toxo, or "elephant", mosquitoes are used to consume Aedes larvae and Amirudin said a pilot project in two dengue hotspots in Subang Jaya last year had shown promising results.

Amirudin also said that as of Feb 18, there were 6,693 dengue cases in Selangor with six deaths.

This was a 40% reduction compared to the same period last year, when there were 11,201 cases with 17 deaths.

"We must continue to step up efforts to eradicate the epidemic. All levels of the community must work together and play their part," he said.

After the launch, officers from the Selayang Municipal Council and Gombak district health office handed out 250 cans of mosquito aerosol spray to residents.

In Shah Alam, Kota Anggerik assemblyman Dr Yaakob Sapari said he would be meeting university students in a bid to reduce den-

gue cases in Section 7, one of the biggest dengue hotspots in Shah Alam.

Dr Yaakob said the area was host to two universities — Universiti Selangor (Unisel) and Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) — and a majority of the students stayed in the neighbouring flats.

These students often left their houses in a rush during the holidays, leaving behind ideal spots for mosquito breeding.

From November 2016 to February this year, Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) visited 2,093 houses in Section 7 but only managed to search 745 units with the other 1,277 closing the doors on them.

"The success of these campaigns depends on engagement with the public and it depends on the people's attitude. We, as government officers, are only trying to assist them," he said at the launch of the aerosol programme in Shah Alam.

MBSA environmental health director Dr Roslan Fadzli said the

council's efforts were focused on raising awareness instead of issuing compound notices, and this was reflected in the number of summonses issued since November.

He said enforcement officers had only issued 12 compound notices since then but had set up a special Dengue Action Unit to raise awareness in Section 7 from 7pm until 10pm nightly.

However, Dr Roslan added that MBSA had reduced the number of dengue cases in the city from January to February compared to last year.

In 2016, there had been about 300 cases during the period but only 170 recorded cases this year.

During the launch of the programme, Yaakob and the MBSA team distributed aerosol cans to residents of Flat B.

MBSA provided 250 aerosol cans while the Selangor state government added another 200 cans to be distributed for the programme.