Groups spread info on dengue

400 volunteers meet Shah Alam residents to educate them on dangers of viral fever

The Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) mobilised 300 groups throughout Shah Alam on Sunday to advocate dengue prevention.

The programme saw volunteers from MBSA, councillors, residents associations, non-governmental organisations, government agencies as well as private and public educational institutions coming together to help spread the message.

Shah Alam mayor Datuk Mohd Jaafar Mohd Atan said this was a direct approach to educate the public on the dangers of dengue and prevention methods.

“We conducted a briefing for all the volunteers earlier to prepare them for this programme,” he said.

MBSA sent out 240 officers, 43 students from the Universiti Teknologi Mara Health Sciences department, 63 from the Shah Alam Community College, eight representatives from the Sahabat Alam Sekitar, 20 volunteers from Salam Medical Centre Sdn Bhd and 84 people from the UiTM non-resident community.

The volunteers could be identified through their button badges and black T-shirts reading “Gerak Advokasi Denggi Shah Alam.”

Mohd Jaafar said the city council would analyse the impact of the programme in two weeks before zeroing in on places that needed attention.

He said this during his visit to the flats in Section 16, Shah Alam.

One of the oldest developments in the city, the 26-block complex with 926 units comprising houses and shoplots is home to about 5,000 people.

“The people here have kept their houses clean but the environment around the flats is not conducive. I will speak to the Selangor government about upgrading their facilities. In the meantime, we will arrange for roll-on, roll-off bins,” he added.

MBSA did not issue compound notices or fines to homeowners whose homes were found to be breeding ground for mosquitoes during the council’s visits.

Mohd Jaafar said the lack of cleanliness in the area needed to be addressed and mindsets had to be changed to ensure a cleaner, healthier environment.

“Awareness is of the utmost importance. Everybody assumes that fogging is the only way to get rid of mosquitoes, but we need to change that attitude,” he added.

Since January 2014, two deaths have been reported in Shah Alam and 26 deaths in Selangor.

MBSA has conducted fogging exercises in 296,255 premises and issued 179 compound notices under the Local Government Act 1976 (Act 171).

Residents in the flats were surprised by the visit from the mayor but took it encouragingly.

Mat Yunan Mohd, 40, said he was glad the volunteers inspected his house and pointed out potential mosquito breeding sites.

“I learnt so many things today. I hope in the future, they will let us know so that we can also help them,” said Yunan.

Another resident, Ranima Mariappan, 61, said she had always been careful and ensured her house did not contain any mosquito breeding grounds.

“Even though we have always been careful, my grandson was hospitalised for dengue last month. It was so disheartening to see him on the hospital bed,” she said.

However, Ranima was not sure where her grandson had been infected because he moved between her house, his father’s house and school.

“I do not keep any container with water,” she added.