

Volume of rubbish in Sungai Gombak affecting water quality

Department urges public to change mindset and stop polluting river

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SUNGAI Gombak is choked with rubbish and the water quality in the surrounding area is under threat.

Selangor Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) has already removed 35 tonnes of rubbish from the river so far this year.

It removed more than 35 tonnes of rubbish from the same river over the whole of last year.

State DID director Azmi Ibrahim said the rising amount of rubbish found in Sungai Gombak was a serious threat to water quality in the area.

"Currently, most of the rivers in Klang Valley have a water quality index classification of Class III, which means it is polluted and requires treatment.

"If things do not change, the quality will deteriorate to Class IV, which means the water is heavily polluted," he explained.

Azmi was speaking at the launch of the River of Life – Public Outreach Programme (ROL-POP) Phases 3B and 4 at Kampung Kerdas, Gombak.

ROL-POP is a programme to improve public attitude and behaviours in reducing pollution

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Azmi Ibrahim

to Klang and Gombak rivers which flow through Selangor and Kuala Lumpur.

In giving an update on the progress of the ROL project, national DID River Basin Management Division director Ng Kok Seng said the river-cleaning component was currently at 78% completion.

"Some of the major ongoing works include upgrading sewerage treatment plants, POP programmes as well as implementing an interceptor pipeline," he said, adding that the division hoped to meet its targeted deadline by 2020.

However, Ng emphasised that a long-term solution had to come from the community.

"Changing the public's mentality



(From left) Ng, Selangor DID deputy director (Development 1) Mohd Azmin Husin and Azmi looking at the accumulated rubbish at one of the log booms at Sungai Gombak during the launch of the River of Life – Public Outreach Programme Phases 3B and 4 in Kampung Kerdas, Gombak. — LOW LAY PHON/The Star

to stop throwing rubbish into rivers is the only way this issue can be resolved.

"We will continue to engage with stakeholders in the hopes of achieving this," he said.

The other two components of the project are river beautification and land development.

Phases 3B and 4 of ROL-POP involves working with communities around the Ampang Jaya and Selayang municipalities.

To help raise awareness,

Asia-Pacific Environmental Consultants Sdn Bhd, the consultant for the ROL-POP Phases 3B and 4, with the support of Selangor DID, has rolled out a public education and awareness-raising campaign known as #mybijaksampah.

As part of the campaign, there will be workshops for residents and schools to demonstrate the proper way to compost food waste and setting up more used cooking oil recycling centres in the Phase 3B project area.