



A refuse room that has been cleaned up and given a new coat of paint at Green Park Condo in Jalan Awan Pintal of Taman Yari, Kuala Lumpur. (Right) Its condition before refurbishment. — Photos: YAP CHEE HONG/The Star

# Cleaning house

SWCorp is helping to clear out and refurbish filthy refuse rooms at high-rise residential buildings in Kuala Lumpur. It is also implementing a waste segregation system and recommending that the spaces remain locked to prevent non-residents from using them. >2&3





**DURIAN FEST POSTPONED**

The third edition of Malaysia International Durian and Cultural Fest 2023 will take place from Sept 8 to 10 at Pavilion Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur. It was originally scheduled for July 14 to 16. For details, WhatsApp 012-313 3143.

**ROAD CLOSURE**

New Pantai Expressway (NPE) will be temporarily closed to traffic for the IJM Allianz Duo Highway Challenge 2023 on July 9, from 2am to 11am. The closure will start from KM1.8 (KL-bound) and Sunway Pyramid at KM1.8 (both directions) all the way to the Kuchai Interchange at KM16.9 and Pantai Dalam at KM11.2 heading towards Bangsar in both directions. Throughout the run, the NPE traffic team and police force will be on duty. For details, call 1-300-88-1010.

**BLOOD DONATION**

> A blood donation and organ pledge drive will be held on July 8 and 9 from 11am to 5pm, at Ground Floor, Paradigm Mall, Petaling Jaya (next to Elle). Open to the public, the drive is organised by QI Group Malaysia and Rythm Foundation. For details, call 012-603 0271 (Kalyani).  
> Pasir Gudang City Council (MBPG) clinic is organising a blood donation drive on July 10, from 10am to 3pm, at Atrium, Kompleks Pusat Bandar Pasir Gudang. For details, visit MBPG Facebook page.

**CAT ADOPTION**

Shah Alam City Council (MBSA) is having a cat adoption drive on July 9 in conjunction with its Car-Free Day event at Dataran Kemerdekaan MBSA, Section 14, Shah Alam, from 7am to 10.30am. The cats have been vaccinated and undergone health inspections.

**RECYCLING PROGRAMME**

There will be several recycling initiatives in conjunction with Ampang Jaya Municipal Council's (MPAJ) Car-Free Day event on July 9. The public can buy compost produced by MPAJ's anaerobic digester and take part in its 'Waste to Food' initiative. For details, call 03-4285 7044.

**UNITY RIDE**

Perak police will hold a 'Mega Unity Ride' at Stadium Indera Mulia in Ipoh on July 23 from 7am to 1pm. Participation is limited to 3,000 people. Registration can be done at <https://proapparel.onpay.my/order/form/pdrmperek> and ends on July 7. For details, call 019-809 9920.

**POOL CLOSURE**

Paroi public swimming pool and Paroi Aquatic Centre in Seremban, Negri Sembilan will be closed until Sept 3 to facilitate repair and maintenance works by Seremban City Council (MBS). For details on its reopening date, check the MBS social media pages.

**ZOO VOLUNTEERS**

Zoo Negara KeeperKu Programme is open to all students aged 13 to 17. For details, call 03-4108 3422 (Education Department), email [education@zoonegaramalaysia.my](mailto:education@zoonegaramalaysia.my) or visit [zoonegara.my/volunteerprogram.html](http://zoonegara.my/volunteerprogram.html)

**CPR COURSE**

The National Heart Association of Malaysia is conducting a basic, hands-only cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course for everyone to learn to save a life in an emergency. It will cover adult CPR and automated external defibrillator (AED) usage. It will be held on July 16, with options for either a morning (9am-noon) or afternoon (2pm-5pm) session, at Menara Suezcap 1, KL Gateway, Jalan Kerinchi, Kuala Lumpur. The fee is RM50. For details, call 03-7931 7900, email [secretariat@malaysian-heart.org](mailto:secretariat@malaysian-heart.org) or visit [www.malaysian-heart.org](http://www.malaysian-heart.org)



The revamped refuse room in PPR Desa Tun Razak is kept locked to prevent outsiders from throwing rubbish here.

# Preventing unauthorised dumping

## High-rise waste collection points in KL to be off-limits to outsiders

By **BAVANI M**  
[bavanim@thestar.com.my](mailto:bavanim@thestar.com.my)

OUT of sight, out of mind – little thought is given to waste once it is thrown down the rubbish chute at condominiums and high-rise apartments.

Overflowing dumpsters are a common sight at the refuse rooms (locally known as *rumah sampah*) of non-landed properties and commercial areas.

Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp), an agency under the Local Government Development Ministry, aims to transform these refuse rooms of high-rise buildings into areas where residents can separate their waste before it is taken to the city's waste transfer station.

This initiative seeks to address the prevailing issue of refuse rooms being misused by residents and the surrounding community as a spot to dump rubbish carelessly.

"Refuse rooms in high-rises are usually incredibly filthy and filled with all sorts of organic and inorganic rubbish.

"These rooms are located on the ground floor and usually face the main road."

"They are meant as a transit point for the rubbish to be brought down from the apartment units and eventually collected by municipal waste collectors like Alam Flora," said SWCorp Federal Territories director Ummi Kalthum Shuib.

"We hope to change people's perception of these rooms and

turn the spaces into functioning waste segregation points.

"The current waste collection system at condominiums and apartments involves cleaners hired by the building management to collect rubbish from the bin room on each floor and transferring them to the refuse room on the ground floor."

About 80% of the rubbish found at these refuse rooms, said Ummi Kalthum, had been dumped by outsiders such as roadside traders and contractors doing renovation works.

Most of the waste at the refuse rooms were not segregated and ended up in the landfill, she added.

**Keeping outsiders out**

To counter this problem, the joint management body (JMB) or management committee (MC) of a building locks the refuse rooms to prevent unauthorised dumping.

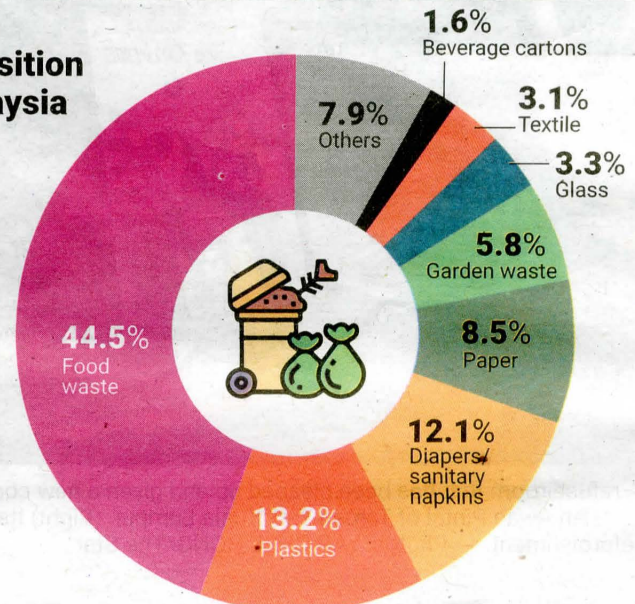
"This is why many refuse rooms are always locked and the green bins are placed outside.

"When the refuse rooms are filthy, residents do not want to segregate the waste inside the room, but want to get out of there as fast as they can," said Ummi Kalthum.

Awareness about the importance of waste segregation and change, she said, was needed to get the people to use the refuse rooms properly.

This transformation involves implementing adequate waste segregation infrastructure, such

**Waste composition in Malaysia**



per day	Waste (tonne)	Per person
<b>Malaysia</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>1.17kg</b>
Kuala Lumpur	2,189	1.15kg
Putrajaya	1,340	1.3kg

Source : SWCorp

TheStargraphics



SWCorp wants refuse chambers in Kuala Lumpur to look like this one in Taman Yarl.

as placing separate bins or compartments for different types of wastes, including recyclables and non-recyclables, she elaborated.

"We intend to promote proper waste management and recycling practices within high-rise buildings," she added.

Ummi Kalthum said the national recycling rate was at 33.17% and was targeted to reach 40% by 2025.

"Our objective is to encourage residents to sort their waste

properly, leading to better waste management practices and reduced environmental impact."

She hoped this would inspire more collaboration between the agency, building managements and residents to create cleaner, more sustainable living spaces for a healthier living environment for residents.

Based on SWCorp's latest data, Ummi Kalthum said waste collection at non-landed properties needed to be reduced.

# Making refuse rooms fit for purpose

THE refuse room or *rumah sampah* at Green Park Condo, in Jalan Awan Pintal of Taman Yarl, Kuala Lumpur, can easily be mistaken for a children's playroom.

Vibrant murals decorate its walls and are complemented by colourful bins inside.

Equipped with security cameras at the entrance and informative posters on recycling, the room has undergone a remarkable transformation.

It is a stark contrast from several months ago, when the space had a towering heap of paper, plastic, glass, fabric and food waste all mixed together.

Rubbish spilled onto the main road, with maggots wriggling out of bags of rotting food.

Rats could be seen scurrying in and out of the room.

With its doors missing, the refuse room was where outsiders such as contractors involved in renovation projects nearby discard their debris.

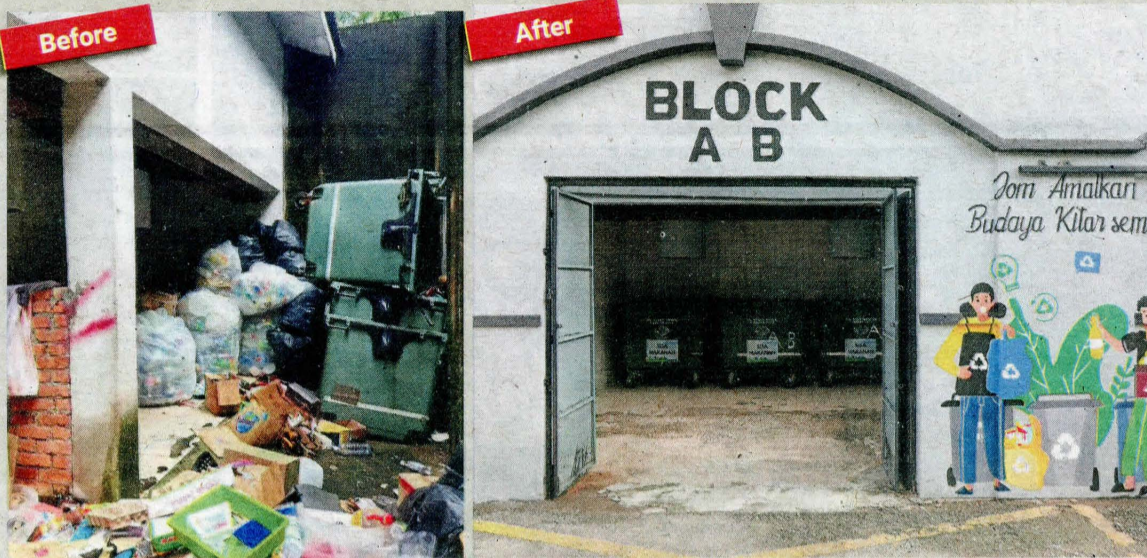
After several months of talks, Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp) managed to convince the condo's two joint management bodies (JMBs) to repair and upgrade the refuse room.

Building manager Kanthan Sathasivam said things were better now that there was a system in place for residents to segregate the waste.

"We were also able to put a stop to outsiders dumping rubbish here.

"The refuse room is locked at night and the security guards hold the keys to it to allow Alam Flora workers access," he added.

Kanthan said the building's



The Green Park Condo refuse room before (left) and after its transformation.



Sinniah says SWCorp is glad to help when building management puts in effort to improve the condition of refuse rooms.



Polystyrene containers and rotting durian husks dumped in front of the refuse room of a multi-storey carpark in Taman Overseas Union.

closed-circuit TV (CCTV) cameras would record anyone dumping rubbish, and follow-up action could be taken.

Similarly at First Residence in Kepong, the JMB managed to transform and restore functionality to its refuse room and

encourage residents to separate their waste.

Residents had raised concerns about the unsightly and unhygienic conditions of the bins and refuse rooms.

"Previously, I had to put up with the stench of rotting rubbish that attracted pests," said student Fiona Lee.

"I am happy that things are much better now."

At Wisma OUG in Jalan Awan Cempaka 4 in Taman Yarl, the refuse room has been given a makeover that now puts a smile on the faces of the cleaners.

"This room was a mess with everyone just dumping rubbish inside the room, and everything was spilling out," said SWCorp enforcement officer Sinniah Visvirthan.

"When the management, (Overseas Union Garden Sdn Bhd) contacted us, we were glad to help since it was eager to make the change and was putting in the effort."

He said the refuse room was looking much better since the clean-up.

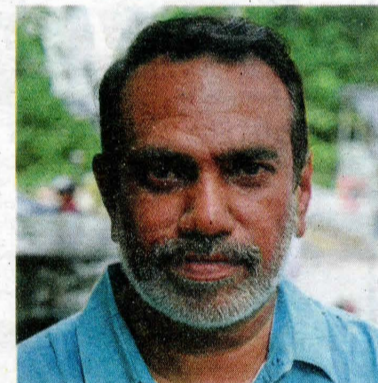
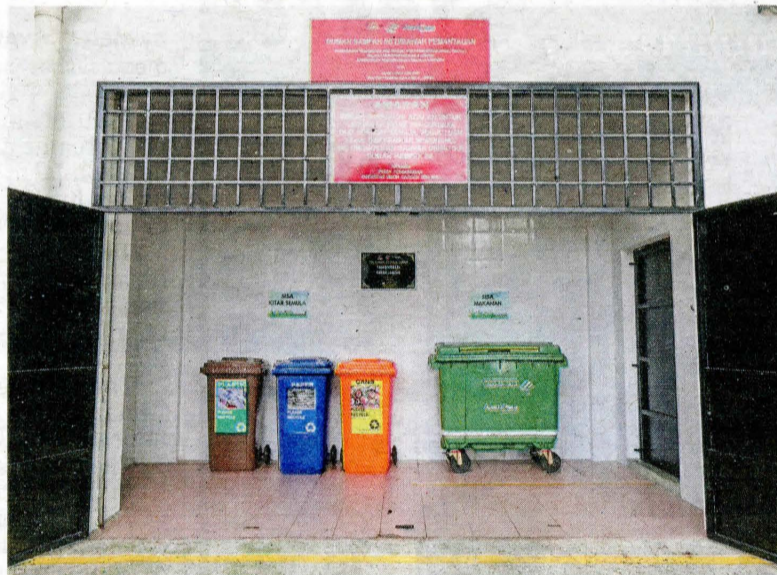
Sinniah said SWCorp also received a request to help transform the refuse room of a multi-storey carpark on Jalan Medan Hujan Rahmat.

"Because of the room's proximity to the morning market and commercial centre, it has become the area's rubbish dump.

"Even the entrance is choked with all sorts of rubbish, but we are working to change that soon," he said. — By BAVANI M



The refuse room at Wisma OUG in Jalan Cempaka before (left) and after its transformation.



Kanthan says the condo has put a stop to outsiders throwing rubbish at its refuse room, by locking it.



Ummi Kalthum says SWCorp will provide the necessary resources to do the initial clean-up.

Based on feedback from JMBs and MCs, she attributed the lack of facilities, infrastructure (by management) and sheer laziness on residents' part as the reasons the amount of waste was increasing.

"For condos, the bin room on each floor ideally should be equipped with one residual bin and three recycling bins so that the residents can segregate their wastes accordingly. But not all JMBs or MCs have this.

"Some apartments do not even have a bin room, so residents have to make a trip down to the refuse room," she said.

Ummi Kalthum said some condominiums and apartments like People's Housing Projects (PPR) had no bin room, so the residents

tended to throw rubbish at corridors, lifts and staircases.

"We are educating the JMBs and MCs that if their premises do not have a bin room, they must ensure the refuse rooms are equipped with the necessary bins," she added.

### Failing to segregate waste

Last year, SWCorp identified 2,033 non-landed properties in Kuala Lumpur that did not practise waste separation at source.

The agency established its JMB units, comprising enforcement officers, who have been going around to educate condo managements on separation at source.

So far, its representatives have

visited about 150 apartments and condominiums in the city.

"No doubt money is also an issue for the building management.

"It is not cheap to buy good quality bins and hire someone to paint and clean the refuse rooms.

"But if they make the effort to change and they need help, we are glad to help out," Ummi Kalthum said, adding that the agency would provide the necessary resources such as a cleaning crew to do the initial clean-up.

### Cracking the whip

"Act 672 (Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Act 2007) makes it mandatory for waste segregation at source, but

those living in high-rises are still not doing so," said Ummi Kalthum.

She said JMBs and MCs that were found not separating waste at source, would be issued with non-compliance letters.

Spotchecks will be carried out until Dec 15 to ensure they adhere to the rules and regulations on waste segregation.

"We are pushing for enforcement to start on Jan 1, 2024.

"For landed premises, offenders will be fined RM50 for the first offence, RM100 for the second offence and RM500 for the third offence," said Ummi Kalthum.

"For non-landed properties, the JMB or MC can be fined RM100, RM200 and RM500, respectively.

"After the third offence, legal action will be initiated.

"After that, we will crack the whip; no more negotiations."

Since the separation at source programme came into force in September 2015, she said there had been more than enough time for residents to put this into practice.