

Former KL mayor: Rope in homeless to clean up city

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A FORMER Kuala Lumpur mayor wants the homeless community roped in to help clean up the capital city.

“Rather than perceiving them as a problem, the (homeless) community that is responsible for 80% of the area’s litter, should actively participate in its cleanup efforts,” said Datuk Seri Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan.

He was the city’s mayor from Oct 2, 2018, to Sept 30, 2020.

Nor Hisham said authorities like Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL), the Welfare Department (JKM) and even waste regulator Solid Waste Management and Public Cleansing Corporation (SWCorp) had to accept that homelessness was a complicated matter.

“The sheer volume of rubbish produced by the homeless community is overwhelming, and even Alam Flora cleaners say it



Nor Hisham: Authorities have to accept that the homelessness issue is complicated.

is affecting their work.

“Business owners are also concerned as people throw rubbish in front of their shops, and tour guides are distressed about the littering at tourist attractions.”

Nor Hisham suggested a collaboration between agencies such as DBKL, SWCorp, JKJ,



Flashback to *StarMetro*’s report on Dec 12.

Alam Flora and local business owners.

He said they should work together, identify the homeless community, divide them into smaller groups and allocate specific areas for them to clean up on a regular basis.

“They should be offered incen-

tives for cleaning their designated areas, reducing the time waste cleaners spend picking up rubbish,” he said.

Nor Hisham said these incentives need not be limited to cash but could include coupons redeemable for groceries from nearby sundry stores.

“They can even become the eyes and ears of DBKL, safeguarding the city’s assets from vandalism.

“To ensure continuity, the group maintaining the cleanest area can be rewarded with cash or other forms of incentives.

“Who knows, they might even develop a sense of belonging for the areas they hang out at and see it as a place to be maintained instead of a temporary sleeping spot,” he added.

Nor Hisham was responding to *StarMetro*’s front-page story titled “Mess in the city” on Dec 12 on the increasing amount of rubbish in downtown Kuala Lumpur’s historical sites that

was generated by the homeless as well as some business owners.

“When I read the article, I was quite annoyed because I was the mayor who attended the opening ceremony of those newly refurbished lanes in November 2018.

“I was present at Lorong Yap Ah Loy and Lorong Bandar 13 when they received their makeover, and I was proud of that project.

“Seeing what it looks like today is just sad,” he said.

SWCorp Federal Territories director Umami Kalthum Shuib who visited the area after being alerted, said efforts were taken to move some of the rubbish bins, including the ones at Lorong Yap Ah Loy, to a better location.

“We have resolved this matter for now, but we need a permanent solution for this issue and I will be meeting with related agencies soon to discuss the matter,” she told *StarMetro*.