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DBKL: Trees felled were already dead

By VIJENTHI NAIR

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TREES that were felled in Taman Rimba Kiara recreational park in Kuala Lumpur on Monday were already dead, said the Kuala Lumpur City Hall's (DBKL) Landscape and Recreational Department.

Its director Mustafa Mohd Nor said his staff went to the site on Wednesday to explain to the angry residents that the tree-felling activity was part of DBKL's maintenance work and that the trees would be replaced.

"Dead trees are at risk of toppling and endangering the safety of park-goers," he said.

Mustafa assured the residents that the area where the trees were felled was not earmarked for a future development project, as it was a gazetted recreational park.

"So there is nothing to worry about," he added.

Mustafa said DBKL and the Forest Research Institute Malaysia (FRIM) were doing their best to care for the trees.

"On April 28, a Canadian arborist invited by FRIM, con-

ducted training for DBKL staff on arboriculture at the Perdana Botanical Garden.

"I have set a target of planting 30,000 trees in Kuala Lumpur by the end of the year.

"We are trying to make Kuala Lumpur greener, so we will not cut trees down unnecessarily," he said.

Segambut MP Lim Lip Eng, who also voiced his concern on the issue, was not convinced that all the felled trees were dead.

"Although I am not an expert on trees, I can tell that the trees were not dead, judging by the healthy trunks, stumps and green leaves of the trees that were cut down.

"Anyway, the damage is done, so I hope DBKL will replant and rectify the damage soon," he said.

Taman Tun Dr Ismail Residents Association secretary Margaret Lee hoped DBKL would inform them on all activities planned in the area.

"The residents are very con-

cerned about the surroundings, so keeping us informed will prevent residents from worrying.

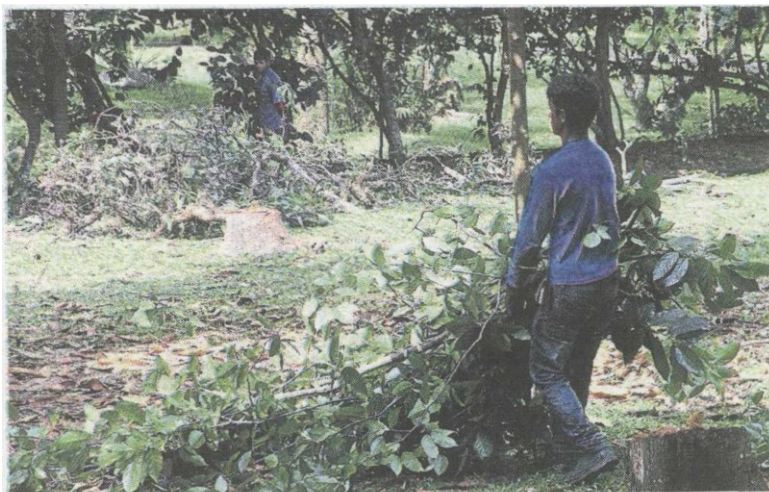
"We are happy that Taman Rimba Kiara is gazetted as a park and DBKL is putting effort into maintaining the greenery," she said.

Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) vice-president Henry Goh said the Government should realise that ratepayers were not naive.

"Dissemination of good and bad news is now only a mouse-click away," he said.

The residents are very concerned about the surroundings, so keeping us informed will prevent residents from worrying.

—MARGARET LEE



Cleaning up: A DBKL worker collecting trunks and branches that had been cut from trees in Taman Rimba Kiara.