

By BRENDA CH'NG
brenda@thestar.com.my

IN LIGHT of the rabies outbreak, complaints relating to strays in various neighbourhoods in Petaling Jaya have gone up, resulting in the local authorities increasing their dog-catching efforts.

Petaling Jaya city councillor Sean Oon called on the public to assist the local council when catching strays rather than resisting and causing more problems.

He was commenting on a recent dog-catching operation in PJS 5, where council officers were threatened and chased by a *parang*-wielding resident.

"The officers had to run to the nearest police station to seek shelter," said Oon when contacted.

He said a police report had been lodged and the officers were now afraid to return to the neighbourhood.

"The resident took photos of the officers and threatened not only them but their family members as well," he added.

Their second attempt at catching stray dogs there was equally frightening as the same resident gave chase and almost hit the vehicle the officers were riding in.

As a result, police officers have agreed to escort Petaling Jaya City Council's (MBPJ) dog-catching team in that neighbourhood and other problematic areas.

"Police will accompany the council officers so that the latter can do their job," said Oon, adding that they could not just ignore residents' complaints about the presence of strays.

Meanwhile, a member of MBPJ's vector unit, which is in charge of

MBPJ steps up its dog-catching efforts

Public urged to cooperate with council officers during operations

fear of rabies was valid.

"This is an issue of public health and safety so I hope the operation to catch strays will not be viewed as cruel but necessary," he said.

Stray dogs roaming the streets are also vulnerable to abuse and even poisoning, the vector unit staff said.

In Bandar Utama 11, more than five stray dogs died in one day, allegedly caused by poisoning.

A resident who had been feeding the dogs found white foam coming out of one dog's mouth near SJK(T) Ladang Effingham along Jalan BU11/1.

A resident who gave her name as Samantha, said she also found two other strays, which she regularly fed, dead with foam in their mouths by the roadside later that day, while a fourth stray in the neighbourhood was also found dead in BU 11's public park that night.

"I know these dogs were not violent," said Samantha, adding that she used to feed about 10 strays daily but now only two are left.

When *StarMetro* visited the spot where one of the dead dogs was found, bird carcasses could also be seen



Stray dogs will be sent to Paws Animal Welfare Association or other no-kill shelters such as Second Chance.

Samantha believes the birds were killed after eating poison put there for the dogs.

Oon said to prevent such incidents from recurring, animal lovers

should work with MBPJ to help find homes for the strays caught.

The dogs will be sent to Paws Animal Welfare Association (Paws) or other no-kill shelters such as

Second Chance.

"Animal lovers can adopt or help fund strays at these shelters to ensure they will not be put to sleep," Oon added.