

Waste disposal service 'to improve'

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our focus is on providing effective solid waste management. This is no longer an issue of your right to throw your waste but of having a clean environment."

He said the government had to enter the picture as the amount from local authorities would not be enough to cover expenditure.

"Our main concern is to improve and ensure high quality service in two years before deciding on the next course of action."

Ong said existing concessionaires would be monitored using the Key Performance Index. He said licences would be issued by the ministry through its National Solid Waste Management Department.

The 88-page bill was tabled in parliament yesterday.

"All this while, local authorities have been facing a lack of finances to manage the process of waste being collected, transported, treated and destroyed in landfills," he said at his office yesterday.

He said local authorities

needed funds to build more sanitary landfills, which were not cheap.

"For effective solid waste management, we need a fool-proof system."

Ong said the bill included separation at source by consumers to prolong the life of landfills.

"We plan to impose the deposit refund system, which is yet to be determined, to control the amount of waste generated besides encouraging recycling.

"As long as we do not have a clear system to follow, the environment will be rapidly polluted by (among others) factories and households."

He said the bill was drafted after having considered best practices in Denmark, Switzerland, Germany, the United States, Japan and Australia.

"A tribunal will be set up for those seeking redress over issues pertaining to licensing, disputed claims or recovery of charges," he said, adding that the tribunal could award claims of up to RM50,000.

On areas covered under public cleanliness manage-

ment, he said they included roads, toilets and drains, government-built and managed hawkers or market centres, beaches, grass on kerbs and animal carcasses.

Another clause in the bill was for waste to be divided into eight categories; commercial, public, construction, household, industrial, institutions, imported waste and waste to be categorised at the minister's prerogative.

"The eighth clause is an enabling clause for waste that can be categorised by the minister when needed," Ong said.

He said authority would also be given to the federal government to sign agreements on solid waste management and public clean-up.

The minister said he would also table consequential amendments to the Solid Waste and Public Cleansing Management Corporation Bill, the Town and Country Planning Bill, the Local Government (Amendment) Bill, and the Street, Drainage and Building (Amendment) Bill.

Although the bill contains punitive measures against

those who do not pay for waste collection, this will only be enforced if charges come into effect.

Under the bill, one would be fined RM5,000 for refusing to pay the bill for garbage collection or other charges.

An additional fine of RM50 a day will be imposed for each day the offence is continued.

The bill empowers the minister to take measures to help in the reduction, reuse and recycling of controlled solid waste.

He may issue orders for:

- Any solid waste generator to reduce the generation of controlled solid waste in any manner or method;
- Any person to use environmentally-friendly material;
- Any person to use specified amounts of recycled materials for specified products; and,
- Any person to limit the generation, import, use, discharge or disposal of specified products or materials.

Those who do not comply with the minister's order are liable to a fine not exceeding RM10,000 or imprisonment of up to six months, or both.



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Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting
Housing and Local Government Minister