



(Top, left) Rubiah says villagers stopped bathing in the river because it was too polluted.



(Top, right) This man was spotted illegally dumping a wheelbarrow-load of rubbish into the river along Jalan Villaraya 3 in Semenyih.

(Bottom, left) A clean-up worker at the site of the third incident where industrial waste was illegally dumped into the river this year.

(Bottom, right) A factory located along the banks of Sungai Semenyih.

Prohibit industries from operating near Sungai Semenyih, says river expert

A RIVER expert is urging the Selangor Government and relevant authorities to move the factories, yards and recycling plants operating along Sungai Semenyih. He said the authorities were not doing enough to protect Sungai Semenyih from contamination especially from the commercial lots located adjacent to the river.

Global Environment Centre (GCE) river care coordinator Dr Kaithasan Kailasam said the factories were located too close to Sungai Semenyih thus increasing the risk of the river getting contaminated.

As long as the industries are allowed to operate close to Sungai Semenyih, he said, the river would constantly be under threat of contamination.

"I think there are too many commercial lots operating in the area and it is high time the authorities work together to protect the river from further contamination.

"It will be very difficult to control the situation unless we are able to clear the area from the potential threat of industries," he said.

Dr Kaithasan said the area adjacent to Sungai Semenyih should be gazetted as a river reserve which would then prohibit industries from operating in the area.

State environment committee chairman Elizabeth Wong said all relevant departments and agencies were already directed to do their part to get rid of factories operating along Sungai Semenyih.

The main agencies involved in the exercise, Wong said, included the Department of Environment, Lembaga Urus Air Selangor (LUAS) and the Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj).

"They have to make sure the factories are not operating anymore in the area if the premises are found to be illegal.

"All factories operating illegally at the site should be shut down through enforce-

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Dr Kaithasan Kailasam

ment action.

"Those who have obtained licences to operate at the area must ensure that they strictly comply to all the rules and regulations pertaining to the environment," Wong said, adding that the situation had been left unattended for too long and it was high time the matter was resolved.

Wong said all parties are working together to resolve the matter and was confident the "illegal" commercial lots and factories responsible for contaminating Sungai Semenyih would be moved out from the area soon.

Meanwhile, State Legalising of Factories committee chairman Ean Yong Hian Wah said only 14 of the factories operating along Sungai Semenyih were licensed.

He said another seven were given planning approval by the Kajang Municipal Council (MPKj) while eight had been identified as illegal.

"We are in the process of getting the factories to be relocated as part of the state's plan to move industries out of the main rivers," he said.

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