



Every drop counts

The recent contamination of Sungai Selangor in Kuala Kubu Baru has alerted authorities to be more vigilant of pollution in our rivers. >2&3

Precious commodity

With the current dry weather and authorities keeping a close watch on water level at dams, it is important to safeguard our rivers.
— By CHAN TAK KONG / The Star



Nature's gift: Sungai Chiling flows into Sungai Selangor.

Protecting the source

It is imperative to safeguard rivers from pollution

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Photos by CHAN TAK KONG

THE recent pollution of Sungai Selangor received wide attention and has drawn the public's focus to the source of our drinking water — our rivers.

With the current dry weather and authorities keeping a close watch on the water level at dams, the need to safeguard our rivers against pollution becomes even

more glaringly critical.

According to state records, 60% of our drinking water comes from Sungai Selangor. Its catchment area is Kuala Kubu Baru (KKB) Dam.

Sungai Selangor itself gets fed by Sungai Pertak, Sungai Chiling, Sungai Bernam and Sungai Kerling which flow downstream from the foot of Fraser's Hill, Pahang, and its surrounding mountains.

From KKB dam, the Sungai Selangor flows near small towns up

to Batang Berjuntai about 30km away.

At the point where the water is taken from Sungai Selangor for processing, it is murky but Syarikat Bekalan Air Selangor Sdn Bhd (Syabas) says that the water is clean enough for consumption.

The pollution incident last month followed the floods caused by Sungai Kerling rising some 2m and bringing along tonnes of mud and sand downstream to Sungai Selangor.

Sungai Selangor's turbidity rose to over 6,000 NTUs (nephelometric turbidity units) compared with 300 NTUs on normal days, and it reportedly caused production at four treatment plants — three along Sungai Selangor and one in Rantau Panjang to decline from 2,460 million litres to 1,000 million litres.

Such a situation begs the question, what would happen if the pollution in Sungai Selangor got

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Catchment area: The Kuala Kubu Baru dam.



Important: The current dry weather has made people appreciate the one thing that we take for granted — water.

Main source:

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Public encouraged to use rainwater

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worse and where would Selangor get its water?

According to state Tourism, Consumer Affairs and Environment Committee chairman Elizabeth Wong, there is a huge catchment of underground water in Kuala Langat.

"If water in Sungai Selangor is polluted, this is an alternative source of water for Selangor. That is why there is no development here, and that it is very important no logging is allowed near the catchment areas," she said, adding that most of the water catchment areas were protected as part of the forest reserve.

Wong said the state had directed Syabas to monitor the pollution in the rivers and, at the same time, look for alternative sources.

She encouraged the public to start using rainwater to water their plants, flush the toilet, wash the porch and clean their drains or fish ponds as part of efforts to reduce burden on our water sources.

"The state has made it a condition for developers of new buildings or houses in Petaling Jaya to have a water-harvesting system.

"In Petaling Jaya, there is a community centre that has a water-harvesting system and I have told the Petaling Jaya City Council to have it in all the 24 zones.

"Use water sparingly and protect the environment for our children and future generations," she reiterated.



Aerial view: From KKB dam, the Sungai Selangor flows near small towns up to Batang Berjuntai about 30km away.