

Robbed sand-less

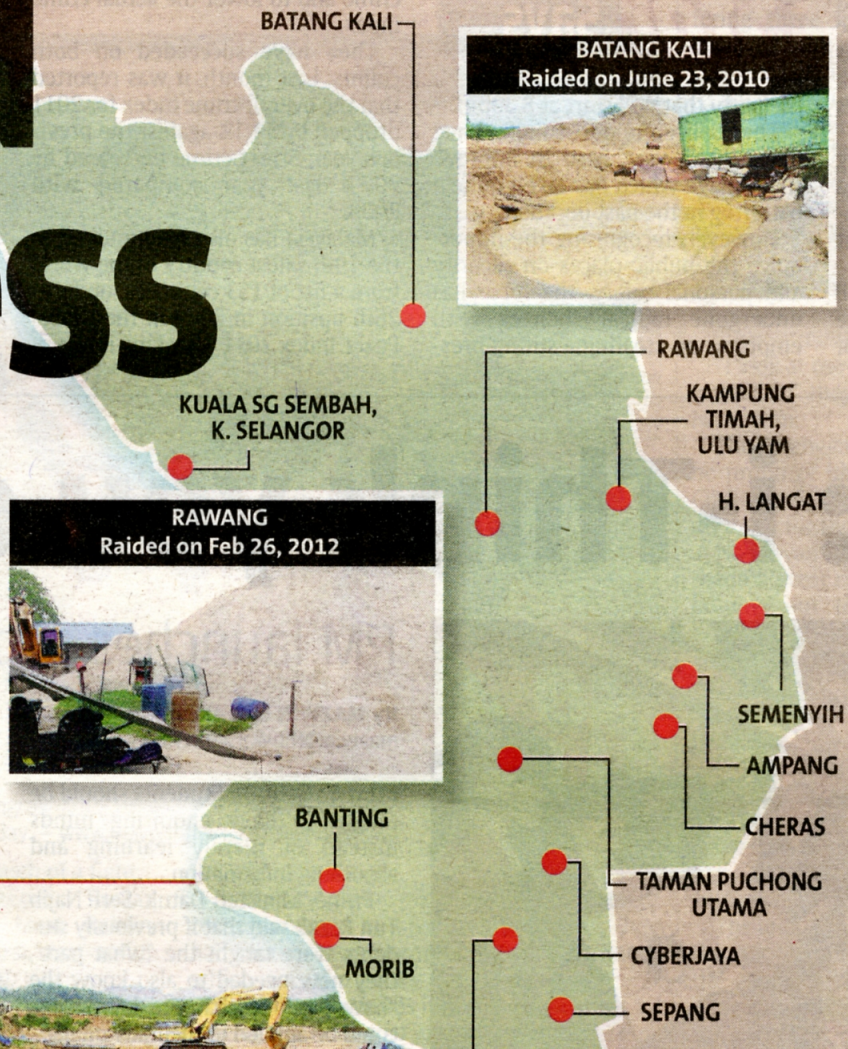
Exclusive

ANOTHER blatant case of sand theft has come to light with the authorities detecting what has been described as the largest illegal mining operation in Selangor so far. It is the size of three football fields and involves several excavators and dozens of lorries. ➤4

KAMPUNG TIMAH, ULU YAM
Raided on March 8, 2012



ILLEGAL SAND-MINING HOTSPOTS IN SELANGOR



BATANG KALI
Raided on June 23, 2010



RAWANG
Raided on Feb 26, 2012



DENGKIL
Raided on April 20, 2009





Large area: Hulu Selangor land office personnel inspecting the illegal sand-mining area in Bukit Beruntung.

Mega sand theft site found

Selangor's biggest illegal mine is the size of three football fields

RAWANG: Sand theft in Selangor has worsened with the latest discovery of another sand-mining area the size of three football fields.

It is believed to be the state's biggest illegal sand-mining activity detected by the authorities so far.

The Hulu Selangor land office discovered it near SKC Kampung Timah in Bukit Beruntung here during an enforcement raid against sand thieves last week.

The culprits bolted during the raid, leaving behind an excavator and a lorry.

Assistant district officer Mohd Rohib Misnan said the illegal activity had been going on for the last six months, acknowledging, however, that it was difficult to catch the thieves.

"We have stationed our officers here to keep an eye on the situation," he said.

During the raid, officers found a pontoon with a suction pump in the middle of Sungai Selangor to extract sand from the riverbed.

There was also evidence of sand being placed on the riverbank for washing. Two sand washing spots



Sand stealer: The pontoon with suction pump which was used to extract sand.

were detected.

It is believed that the thieves used three excavators to scoop up the washed sand and load it onto the lorries.

A land office source said that heavy vehicles would frequent the area in the evenings or wee hours of the morning to avoid prying eyes.

To throw authorities off the track, the drivers would use different routes including gravel roads.

Among the alternative roads they used included going through Bukit

Tagar, Bukit Beruntung, Tanjung Malim and Bukit Sentosa, the source said.

Last month, the land office seized a lorry which had been transporting sand.

"The authorities have found it hard to catch the culprits since there is also a legal sand-mining site operating about 5km away," he said.

The high demand for sand in Malaysia has pushed up its prices. Washed sand costs about RM13 to RM40 per tonne.



We have stationed our officers here to keep an eye on the situation.

— MOHD ROHIB MISNAN

It is said that sand prices are the highest here, which is a factor in the high cost of houses in the Klang Valley.

About 200 tonnes of sand are needed in the construction of a 2,000sq ft link house.

The Star has been reporting about illegal sand-mining activities in Selangor for the last four years.

Hotspots for the illegal sand-mining activities have also been mapped out.

They include Serendah and Ulu Bernam in Hulu Selangor, Dengkil in Sepang, Kundang, Kuang, Rawang, Kajang, Bestari Jaya in Kuala Selangor, Cyberjaya, Cheras, Batang Kali, Banting and Bukit Beruntung.

MACC probes big-bucks illegal sand mine case

PETALING JAYA: The Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) is now investigating what it has described as the biggest illegal sand-mining activity in Selangor.

Referring to the discovery of a sand-mining area the size of three football fields in Rawang, an official from MACC said: "In a small-scale illegal sand-mining activity, there would be an excavator, a washing area and a few lorries.

"However, this area has three excavators, two sand washing areas, a pontoon suction pump in the river and dozens of lorries."

The official, who declined to be named, said the MACC was aware of the illegal sand-mining activity in the area and was conducting aerial and land inspections.

"We are also working with the state Drainage and Irrigation Department to get more information," he said.

This latest illegal sand-mining operation is in an area where many farmers would rear fish.

The official said an MACC team was waiting to pounce on the sand thieves when they remove vehicles or transport sand from the sand-mining area.

"There are still heavy machinery like a pontoon, an excavator, a lorry and steel pipes at the site.

"We received information about the illegal sand-mining activity from residents several months ago. But this is a massive operation which takes weeks to complete," he said.