



Ku Nan: No Sand miners: Yes



Operators still at it

Lorries have been transporting sand into the area daily (left). The operators were nowhere to be seen when law enforcement officers raided the site (above). — LOW BOON TAT / The Star

Despite constant raids and a stop-work order by the FT Minister, illegal sand-washing operators in Batu 4, Jalan Kelang Lama are blatantly ignoring the law by continuing their business. >2&3

Enough is enough

Illegal sand-washing activities continue, say residents

DESPITE a crackdown on the illegal sand-mining operations in Batu 4, Jalan Kelang Lama, Kuala Lumpur two weeks ago, the operators continue to operate brazenly, without fear of the authorities.

Residents in the area called *StarMetro* to complain that the operators were still at it.

The crackdown came following a report in *StarMetro* highlighting the illegal activity and Federal Territories Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor ordered the closure.

"They are playing a cat-and-mouse game with the authorities," said a resident who did not want to be named.

"Operations start as early as 7am. Currently, they are using another route to transport sand to the site.

"The route is not through Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) land. It belongs to the Federal Territory Land and Mines Department (PTG)," he added.

The residents said the lorries car-

A place for the children to play

Seri Anggerik PPR residents want government land turned into a park

By BAVANI M
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RESIDENTS living in the Seri Anggerik Public Housing Project (PPR) in Batu 4, Jalan Kelang Lama want the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (DBKL) to put the land that was used illegally for sand-mining activities in front of their homes, to good use and benefit the public.

"Give us the land and we will turn it into a park or green space for our children to play in," said a resident who only wanted to be identified as Siti.

"Even though there was talk that the authorities planned to build a surau here, this might take some time so we would like to use it first," Siti said.

Another resident, M. Letchumy agreed

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Siti

with Siti.

"My children can play football and badminton here," she said.

The residents, who were relocated from various squatter colonies in the Lembah Pantai constituency, have been living in cramped

quarters in Seri Anggerik for years as the housing area is congested and surrounded by big buildings.

They only have a small playground for recreation and are looking for more space for the community to enjoy.

However, the only available land nearby was being used for illegal sand-washing operations.

StarMetro had highlighted their complaints regarding a mining company that is operating on Government land next to their housing area.

Following the expose, the Federal Territories Ministry ordered the operations to be shut down.

Minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor ordered the closure after he was told that the company did not have the

required permit and had been years despite complaints from residents.

The authorities had been accused of the buck instead of resolving the issue. A DBKL source said that the land earmarked for the construction of the Federal Territory Department (Jawi) had yet to land title.

Residents who tipped off *StarMetro* carrying sand into the area many as 40 to 50 trips daily by 6pm.

They complained that apart from the noise from the mining, Klang River was being polluted with wastewater was discharged into the river.

We will fence up the area that belongs to DBKL and ask PTG to take action and safeguard its area.

— DATUK SERI AHMAD PHESAL

Flashback: The *StarMetro* report on Sept 14 about residents asking the Government to turn the land into a park.

rying sand into the area would make as many as 40 to 50 trips daily, between 8am and 6pm.

The current market price for sand is RM600 per lorry.

"We want this to stop! Enough is enough. This is Government land and should not be abused like this," said the resident.

Many also questioned the presence of illegal shop houses con-

structed near the area on DBKL land.

"How can they do this?" questioned another resident.

"I have never seen such disregard for the law in my life," he said.

StarMetro visited the site yesterday and saw several DBKL enforcement officers there.

However, apart from the officers present, the place looked abandoned,

with no one in sight.

"I saw five lorries full of sand coming in at 8am. There were two tractors at the site.

"But by 10am, when the DBKL officers arrived, no one was around. Even the machinery was gone. I think they were tipped off," said another resident, who also did not

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No activity: Although eyewitnesses claim that the site was in operation at 8am yesterday, the place was found to be abandoned when DBKL visited the site at 10 am. (Inset) The piping system that is connected to the Klang River.



Questionable: Residents are questioning the legality of these shophouses built by the operator on DBKL land.

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Crackdown following StarMetro report on illegal activity

want to be named.

When contacted, Kuala Lumpur mayor Datuk Seri Ahmad Phasal said all operations on DBKL land had been stopped.

"We will fence up the area that belongs to DBKL and ask the PTG to take action and safeguard its area," said Ahmad Phasal, adding that DBKL would also monitor the area.

After several weeks of investigations following a tip-off from the public living in the Seri Anggerik People's Housing Project (PPR), it highlighted how a piece of Government land had ended up in the hands of mining operators conducting sand-washing activities.

The land was used for sand-wash-

ing activities for several years, and residents interviewed said they not only had to put with the dust and noise but that the Klang River was also being polluted as the untreated waste water was being discharged back into the river.

The residents had claimed the operator was well connected and this had enabled him to carry out the activity for many years.

A Drainage and Irrigation Department source also confirmed

that the operator did not have the required permits to carry out sand-washing activities at the site.

Meanwhile, another resident, who only wished to be known as Pak Ali, said the PPR area was congested because so many buildings were surrounding it.

"Even the oxidation pond at the back is polluted. We need more space for the community to use for recreation purposes," he said, adding that the residents living nearby want the

land to be turned into a park or green space.

DBKL deputy director-general (Socio-Economic Development) Datuk Mohd Amin Nordin Abd Aziz said he had no problems handing the land over to the residents to be used for recreational purposes.

"We will fence it up and let the residents use it, but my advice to them is not to build any structures on it," he said.



Polluted: The non-functioning oxidation pond next to Seri Anggerik PPR is also said to contribute to the stench and breeding ground for mosquitoes. — filepic