

Authorities to investigate legality of activities

THE Department of Irrigation and Drainage Malaysia (DID) will be conducting an investigation into the sand washing activities in Jalan Kelang Lama.

DID river basin management division director Mohd Said Dikon told *StarMetro* that a team would be sent to inspect the site and prepare a report.

"This concerns the feedback of multiple agencies, such as Kuala Lumpur City Hall and the Land Office, so we need to check on the legality of the operation," he said.

"I will find out who is behind this," he added.

Mohd Said said there were guidelines to carry out such activities along the river bank and if not followed properly, it would not bode well for the health of the river.

Meanwhile, environmentalist Dr Kalithasan Kailasam from the Global Environment Centre (GEC) said that sand washing in general was not environmentally friendly and will impact the river, especially since sediment is being disposed in the river.

Kalithasan, who is GEC's River Care Programme Coordinator, said, "The Government must look at the big picture. Their river cleaning efforts are aimed at improving the water quality from current Class III and V to Class IIB, which would make it safe enough to touch."

"It is illogical to carry out cleaning efforts upstream and allow sand washing activities downstream."

"You may not see any damage now, but in the long term, it will affect the river and the aquatic animals living in it," he said.

"The whole point of river cleaning is to make it sustainable and teeming with life. Everyone wants to see that happen with the Klang River," Kalithasan added.

The Government, through its River of Life (RoL) project, which is one of the Entry Point Projects under the Greater Kuala Lumpur/Klang Valley National Key Economic Area (NKEA), is spending a whopping RM4bil to clean, beautify and develop lands along the Klang River.

Twenty-six agencies from four ministries, two states and three municipalities are working together on this mammoth project, which seeks to turn the Greater KUKV area into one that is among the most livable and top economic cities in the world.

Since 2011, the on-going project is now nearing completion of its first phase, the River Cleaning phase, which aims to clean and improve the 110km stretch along the tributaries of Sungai Kiang in Kuala Lumpur.



1 A view of the site from a high building. It shows the sand washing activity going on. 2 A smaller stream near the river bank which is connected with pumps discharging muddy water from the site.

However, many operators do so illegally as it is a lucrative industry.

According to residents, numerous calls were made to DBKL but they were informed that it was not under their jurisdiction but the Land Office.

StarMetro had previously

exposed illegal sand washing operations in other parts of Jalan Kelang Lama – one was on government land beside the Seri Anggerik People's Housing Project (PPR) in Batu 4, Jalan Kelang Lama, while another was in Taman Sri Manja.

The Federal Territories Ministry ordered a clamp

down on the activity, with minister Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor issuing the closure order, as it went against the government river cleaning projects.

Watch the video
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