

Bauxite miners' licences may be revoked, says Adnan

KUANTAN: Bauxite mining operators who had been illegally pumping water from rivers near Bukit Goh near here will face action, the state assembly heard yesterday.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob said checks conducted on Oct 20 revealed that miners had drawn water from Sungai Rong and Sungai Taweh without approval.

He said the residue from bauxite processing could overflow into the rivers and affect the source of clean water for villagers and possibly trigger floods.

"Sungai Lembing assemblyman (Datuk Md Sohaimi Mohamed Shah) and Drainage and Irrigation Department (DID) officers conducted investigations at the sites and found that the companies had flouted mining regulations.

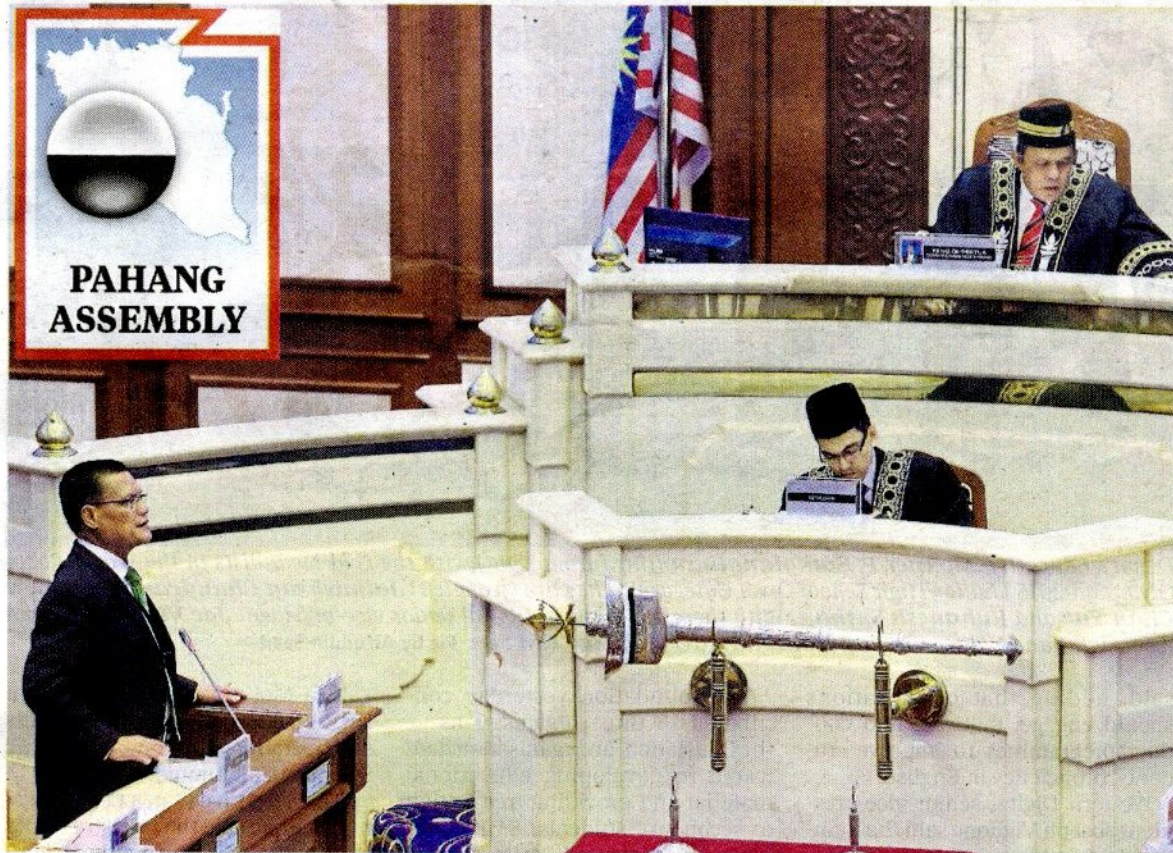
"They have illegally diverted water from the rivers into their reservoirs to clean bauxite.

"The authorities will order them to break the illegal water supply or risk having their licences revoked," he said in his winding-up speech on the state's 2016 Budget at Wisma Sri Pahang here,

Adnan said the matter would be discussed with the relevant agencies, including DID, at the state executive council meeting next week to find a solution.

He said bauxite mine operators should realise they were raking a lucrative income as there is a ban in Indonesia on the export of the mineral.

"Maybe if Indonesia lifts the ban next year, bauxite mining and export activities in the country will decrease.



Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob (left) addressing the state assembly at Wisma Sri Pahang in Kuantan yesterday. Pic by Luqman Hakim Zubir

"Failure to follow the rules might force the Federal Government to intervene, like what happened in Cameron Highlands," he said.

On another matter, Adnan said the state government would embark on a programme to replant timber species to replace trees which had been logged or felled to make way for agriculture.

He said the programme was different from the *ladang hutan* (forest estate) project under the state Forestry Department, which emphasised on replanting high quality timber species.

"There are certain rules and regulations for proper logging, but the problem is that some people are too greedy and do not care about the

impact from their activities.

"We will ensure that the tree replanting project, including replanting *meranti* and *cengal* saplings, is carried out.

"Every time they chop down a tree, the loggers will have to replant another to ensure the future of the forest is secured," he said.

The assembly adjourned *sine die*.