



Dead fish floating in Sungai Tonggak near Gebeng yesterday. Pic by Farizul Hafiz Awang

Hundreds of dead fish found in Sg Tonggak

ALARMED: Villagers want authorities to find cause as they fish in river

T.N. ALAGESH

KUANTAN

alagesh@nst.com.my

A WEEK after the “red sea” phenomenon at Balok beach here, nearby villagers were in for another shock yesterday when they found hundreds of dead fish in Sungai Tonggak near Gebeng.

Balok Makmur Rukun Tetangga

chairman Abdul Rahman Ali, 57, said villagers spotted many dead *belanak* (mullet) fish washed up on the river banks during low tide about 7.30am.

He said as far as he knew, there were no bauxite stockpiles nearby and it was impossible for the ores to enter the river.

“However, the contaminated water may have come from other

sources, including drains, or the dead fish may have been killed by the ‘red sea’ water last week and swept by currents into this part of the river.

“As villagers sometimes catch fish in the river, I hope the authorities will conduct checks to confirm if the fish is safe for eating,” he said yesterday.

Abdul Razak Musa, 56, from Taman Seberang Balok, said it was the second time that the incident had happened near the village.

“A similar incident occurred some time ago, but it was a smaller number of dead fish than it is now.

“With bauxite mining a hot topic, we cannot rule out the possibility that river contamination from bauxite ores has killed the fish,” he said.

State Fisheries director Adnan Hussain said his officers had conducted tests and collected water samples for analysis.

“After tests by our officers, the results show that the incident is nothing unusual. Initial tests show that the fish deaths have nothing to do with silt and mud. No other rivers here are affected, except Sungai Tonggak.”

He said a detailed report on the incident was expected to be completed in a week.