



The polluted Sungai Mas that flows into the sea in Batu Ferringhi, Penang, yesterday. Pic by Danial Saad

Polluted river stench hits Batu Ferringhi

UNBEARABLE: Murky Sg Mas emits foul smell that irks tourists, hotel operators

BALVIN KAUR
GEORGE TOWN

balvinkaur@nst.com.my

RIVER pollution has once again marred the popular Batu Ferringhi beachfront with murky water and foul odour.

Checks by the *New Straits Times* yesterday found murky water flowing from Sungai Mas here, which is located between Lone Pine Hotel and a hawker centre.

The water, which emits a foul odour, flows through a 100m-stretch of the seaside.

Tourists were seen pinching their

noses as they walked near the river

Engineer Tanya Abdullah, 34, said she was shocked to see the condition of the tourist hotspot.

"The beach is no longer as beautiful as it was 15 years ago. It is stinky and dirty. I won't let my children swim in the sea like I used to as a child."

Lone Pine manager Khoo Boo Lim said the hotel had received complaints from guests about the foul smell from the murky river.

"The situation worsens during the dry season."

The Department of Environment has identified the illegal structures

along the river as the source of the pollution.

Its director, Norhayati Yahya, said the source of the pollution was well-known.

When asked on possible remedial action, she said it was under the jurisdiction of the local council.

In February 2014, the NST front-paged a report exposing the dismal condition of Sungai Batu Ferringhi, which was polluted by murky and foul-smelling water from a sewage plant 300m from the river mouth.

The NST had also revealed that Sungai Mas was in no better condition due to discharge from restaurants and houses along the river.

The public outcry that followed forced the state government to set up a river and marine pollution task force.