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Only three companies admit to open burning in Indonesia

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Only three companies have contacted the National Security Division about allegations that they had conducted open burning for land-clearing in Indonesia.

The three companies are EPA Management Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Johor Corporation; the Perak Agriculture Development Corporation, and Kos Farm Sdn Bhd.

Although the three admitted there was burning in their land recently, they denied starting the fire.

"They said the fire had spread from adjacent areas. They also said that they had put out the fire," said an official.

The three are involved in joint ventures with Indonesian plantation companies.

The Government had given Malaysian investors, believed to be partly responsible for causing forest fires in Indonesia, until the end of yesterday to own up or face consequences.

This was decided at yesterday's National Disaster Management and Relief Committee meeting, chaired by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Mahathir said the Malaysian firms involved must accept responsibility and contribute to expenses in putting out the fires.

Satellite images had shown hotspots in the land belonging to companies partly-owned by the Malaysian investors.

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