

## **Gov't made mistake, admits Najib over bauxite contamination**

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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today admitted that bauxite contamination in Pahang was a mistake made by the government.

He said this when stressing the importance of sustainable environment when delivering his keynote address at the Invest Malaysia 2016 event in Kuala Lumpur.

"A sustainable economy is one in which we take care of our environment, and we are doing so.

"Of course, sometimes we make mistakes - the bauxite contamination in the east coast is an example.

"But we are taking steps to deal with it. We have just extended the ban on mining for another three months and we will insist that strict guidelines are put in place before it is lifted," he said.

However, Najib did not elaborate on the details of the mistakes over bauxite contamination which has caused the local residents to suffer.

Bauxite mining in Malaysia has grown extensively after Indonesia banned its bauxite export in Jan 2014.

It was reported that the annual export of bauxite ore has increased from a 200,000 tonnes in 2013 to nearly 20 million tonnes in 2015.

Pahang state government collected RM46.7 million in bauxite royalties in 2015 as compared with only RM2.4 million in 2014.

Residents in Pahang had suffered from bauxite pollution in their daily lives, and they claimed the river and sea turned reddish.

Natural Resources and Environment Minister Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar had announced that the three-month moratorium on bauxite mining in Kuantan which was supposed to end on April 15, would be **extended** by three more months.

The extension was to enable, among others, the existing bauxite stockpile of almost four million tonnes to be cleared or exported.

In his speech today, Najib said: The government is dedicated to serving the people and I can assure you that we will continue to put their interest and their future first. Everytime."

He said the government will consider providing incentives to companies that offset their carbon footprint with Malaysian rainforest credit.

Najib also claimed that the country is short of 130 women to make up the 30 percent quota in the top 100 companies' board of directors.

"And I am delighted to be able to say that, right now, in order to achieve our goal of women making up 30 percent of the boards of the top 100 companies in Malaysia, we only need another 130 women. So, get hiring!" he said.