

Noh Omar: Selangor gov't avoided preparing EIA
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The Selangor government wanted to avoid having to prepare the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report when it applied for approval to mine sand near the Paya Indah Wetlands in Dengkil, said Selangor Umno deputy chief Noh Omar.

He said according to the legal provisions, any area of more 50 hectares in size required an EIA report before the Environmental Management Plan could be approved.

"But the application by the state government involved 48 hectares, two hectares short. But if we look at the areas mined for sand, they are mostly more than 50 hectares in size."

noh omar statement in paper parliament pc 301105 ignorantNoh (right), who is also agriculture and agro-based industry minister, said this after having an aerial view from a helicopter of sand mining activities near the Paya Indah Wetlands, Kuala Langat and in Berjantai Bestari, Kuala Selangor.

He questioned whether the monitoring of sand mining activities was in accordance with the stipulated guidelines as he had noticed that a hollow spot left by sand mining was about 200 feet deep.

Easy money

He also questioned whether the state government was transparent when it gave the right to mine sand to Kumpulan Semesta Sdn Bhd (KKSB) which was claimed to enjoy a monopoly, but made easy money by appointing a contractor to do the job.

"Was there an open tender? I understand there was none, which was in contradiction to the opposition pact's promise during the last general election campaign that it would ensure transparency in its administration if it came to power."

Noh said from a discussion he had with Transport Minister Datuk Seri Kong Cho Ha on the issue, he was made to understand that the sand mined near the Paya Indah Wetlands was meant for the building of the Low-Cost Carrier Terminal (LCCT) in Sepang.

"If it is true, we seek the LCCT's cooperation to see that the sand bought was mined according to the proper procedures, otherwise it would be abetting something that is wrong. If LCCT does not buy the sand, then it cannot be mined in such a huge amount."

Noh said Selangor Umno would lodge a report with the police and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission, asking them to investigate whether there was breach of procedures or the law in the sand mining activities.

He said Selangor Umno Youth would also hand over a memorandum to the state government over the sand mining issue during the state assembly sitting on Thursday.

- Bernama