

Sand problems: Concrete results in one year, says MB
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The Selangor state government has pledged to achieve concrete progress within a year in the state's fight against illegal sand miners.

Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim was brimming with optimism despite the federal government rejecting the state government's request for assistance.

"The DPM (Muhyiddin Yassin) said it is up to the state. That is why the state will work hard... we may not be able to do much in one month, but I believe we can see progress in one year," he told a press conference at the state assembly today.

Earlier today, Muhyiddin was quoted by Bernama as saying that the Selangor government would have to use its own "wisdom" to tackle the menace, as the federal government had no jurisdiction in the matter.

In an immediate response, Khalid said the state was continuously monitoring the situation and using its full enforcement might to bring to book illegal sand miners.

A report presented by state secretary Ramli Mahmud showed that a total of 27 excavators and 33 lorries have been seized from 2009 until June this year in connection with the rogue activity.

Rewards offered for successful seizures

Ramli said the state had also seized 11 plots of private land, with the most expensive valued at RM4 million, with another 85 possible seizures for either allowing or being directly involved in sand mining without a licence.

Ramli noted that apart from enforcement activities, the state government was also engaging with the public by offering rewards for information leading to the successful seizure of equipment and also running 24-hour surveillance with the help of Rela members.

Khalid said it was vital that Selangor had a systematic management and enforcement system for its natural resources.

He also reiterated that state sand mining arm Kuala Semesta Sdn Bhd (KSSB) has helped the government to better understand the business of sand mining so that the industry could be better regulated and protected.

"We have to use state resources, so the state gets two parts. One is royalty from private operations and second is the profit (from KSSB)... but we must also have a fine balance.

"It is the duty of the government to make sure all state resources are managed well, while at the same time providing a platform for business activities," Khalid added.

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