

Gazette river banks, says PM

KUALA LUMPUR: River banks should be gazetted as reserve areas to prevent the public from turning the waterways into rubbish dumps, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said yesterday.

The Prime Minister said residents would be tempted to do so if homes were built too close to rivers.

"If we build houses and factories too near rivers, residents are likely to throw rubbish and pollute the waterways. We must have ample space between rivers and development areas."

Speaking to reporters after the launching of Gagasan Badan Ekonomi Melayu or Gabem (Cluster of Malay Economic Bodies), he said steps were being taken to prevent environmental degradation.

He said legislation and guidelines on environmental protection were being reviewed and proposed amendments had been submitted to the Attorney-General's Chambers.

Meanwhile, Bernama reports Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo as saying that Taman Zooview and the areas adjacent to the site of last Wednesday's landslide in Kampung Pasir, Hulu Klang, face a calamity if a retaining wall is not built immediately.

He said the authorities wanted the developers concerned to speed up construction of the wall to ensure residents' safety.

The developers had been advised by the Public Works Institute to build the retaining wall to protect the hill slopes in the area.

"The housing developers, especially at Ukay Bestari, who had been instructed to expedite work on the wall, claimed that they didn't have the funds and sought financial assistance from the Government," he said.

However, the State Government was not going to entertain the request, he said, as it was the responsibility of the developers.