

**Anti-Lynas group claims 'too many restrictions' to study permit papers**  
**The Malaysian Insider**  
**January 03, 2012**  
**By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal**

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 3 — An anti-Lynas group today accused Putrajaya of imposing “too many restrictions” in the public viewing of the rare earth producer’s application permit, saying it was impossible to study the documents under such circumstances.

The Science, Technology and Innovation Ministry (MOSTI) recently announced that Lynas had applied for a temporary operational licence for its controversial refinery in Pahang, with director-general Datuk Madinah Mohamad saying the government will display the Australian mining giant’s local company application documents for public feedback before reaching its decision.

Save Malaysia Stop Lynas (SMSL) chairman Tan Bun Teet however charged that it was impossible for the public to view the pre-operating licence in Kuantan as it turned out to be a limited closed-door session.

He told The Malaysian Insider that only one person was allowed to view the 300-400-page-long document for a maximum of one hour, and that there were other hard or soft copies available for people to “scrutinise.”

“There are too many restrictions for stakeholders. We can view it for 14 days starting January 3, only one person per hour, each day the office is open for seven hours.

“Which means that on average only 98 people will be able to look at the document... how do you go through a 300-page document in one hour? And not be allowed a soft copy for our perusal?” Tan said.

He said MOSTI should provide the public with more than just one copy of the document if it was “sincere” in public consultation over the matter.

“Can MOSTI tell us which one of their officers can study a document that thick within one hour?” he added.

The documents will be on display daily from January 3-17 at the Atomic Energy Licensing Board (AELB) headquarters in Dengkil, Selangor.

They can also be viewed at the Pahang State Secretariat in Kuantan and at the AELB temporary office at the Lynas (M) Sdn Bhd project site in Gebeng as well as at the AELB east coast branch office in Kemaman, Terengganu.

Lynas Corp has already resorted to placing full-page advertisements in mainstream newspapers to defend itself from criticisms over its nearly-completed rare earth refinery.

Through the advertisements, the Australian mining firm addressed several frequent allegations against its operations, including offering its promise that it complies with all Australian, international and Malaysian standards.

The controversial RM1.5 billion plant being built in the prime minister's home state of Pahang is now said to be more than 85 per cent complete and is expected to power up by early next year.

The rare earth refinery, touted to be the biggest in the world, aims to break China's near-complete stranglehold of the minerals required to manufacture high-technology products like hybrid cars, smartphones to bombs.

But public protests by local residents and environmental groups over the possible radioactive hazard posed by the plant this year put the brakes on Lynas' plans.

The outcry prompted a review by a nine-man panel of experts from the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), who instructed the Sydney-based company to provide a better long-term waste management plan.

Putrajaya, which imposed tighter environmental safety standards on the proposed plant in June following the high-profile protests, has yet to issue a pre-operating licence for the plant.

The Australian government's Department of Mines and Petroleum issued a statement on December 16 stating that Lynas Corp's operations were safe and that it abided by international safety conventions.

The Malaysian Insider

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