

**Kedah To Stop Logging Pending Review - Mukhriz
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ALOR SETAR, May 18 (Bernama) -- The Kedah government will temporarily cease all logging activities in the state pending a study on their impact on the environment and the people's livelihood, said Menteri Besar Datuk Mukhriz Tun Mahathir.

He said this followed complaints from villagers that logging activities in their areas had affected the supply and quality of water.

"Logging activities in the state will be temporarily ceased to enable us to conduct the EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) in areas involved and they will resume upon EIA recommendations," he told reporters after a thanksgiving reception at Seri Mentaloon, the menteri besar's official residence, here today.

Mukhriz said he wanted to ensure that loggers abide by the conditions imposed on logging activities.

"If there is any valid complaint backed by concrete evidence that the conditions are not complied with, I will not hesitate to stop the logging activity immediately. I want all logging concessions given to be reviewed. We want to ensure that the people's interest comes first.

"In future, as far as possible, I will not approve any more logging concession. I think we have enough logging activities in the state. We have to find other sources of income for Kedah.

"To me, a tree is worth more standing than felled. There are potentials and opportunities for tourism and other industries (to grow)," he added.

In another development, Mukhriz said he had met Insaniah University College (Kuin) top management, including its rector, Prof Dr Jamil Osman over the problems faced by the state-owned institution.

He said State Education, Transport and Works Committee chairman Datuk Tajul Urus Mat Zain would look into Kuin's problems and provide a report to him (Mukhriz) on a new direction for Kuin.

"We will talk to other parties involved. Most importantly, we will safeguard the welfare of Kuin's students and staff first before that of the management," he said.

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