

# Elements of graft in bauxite mining

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**'SERIOUS':** MACC probing parties, from the 'lorry driver up to the top'

**TASNIM LOKMAN**  
KUALA LUMPUR  
news@nst.com.my

**T**HE Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has established that there are elements of corruption in the bauxite mining operations in Kuantan.

In a statement yesterday, MACC said it had received many complaints on environmental pollution resulting from the uncontrolled mining activities.

"Based on the complaints, MACC has found elements of corruption committed by certain parties involved in the bauxite mining operations.

"The commission takes this seriously and will not hesitate to take action against those who are involved in corruption and abuse of power under the MACC Act 2009."

A source from MACC told the *New Straits Times* that it was investigating parties involved, "from the lorry driver up to the top".

"The lorry companies and their drivers are believed to be raking in millions of ringgit.

"Can you imagine how much the mining companies and land owners are making?" the source said.

## We are not suffering from denial syndrome, says Adnan

**KUALA LUMPUR:** A visibly tense Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob yesterday dismissed claims that the state government was not taking measures to handle the bauxite mining issue in Kuantan.

He had been bombarded with questions at a press conference with Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri

Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar here. "We are not suffering from denial

syndrome and we are not playing the blame game. The people's welfare remains our top priority. It is more important than monetary benefits. We are doing our best."

**The people's welfare remains our top priority. It is more important than monetary benefits.**

**Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar**  
Natural resources and environment minister

On public concern for pollution, he advised residents to remain calm as the state and federal governments were taking measures to curb the problem.

"All these complaints will be brought up in my discussions with department heads.

We will come up with a solution."

Asked about calls for the state government to compensate residents affected by the pollution, he said: "The people in Kuantan have never asked for compensation. In fact, some want the bauxite mining operations to continue."

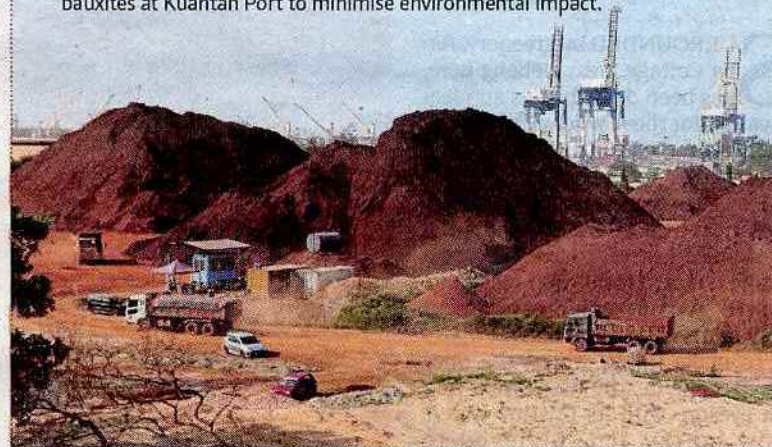
The Penang Consumers' Association had urged the state government to compensate residents affected by the mining.

Adnan said he "knew what to do" about fatal road accidents caused by lorries transporting bauxite.

He said Pahang earned RM46.7 million in royalties from the export of bauxite last year and RM2.4 million in 2014.

Decision on bauxite mining issue (by Pahang government and the Natural Resources and Environment Ministry).

- Three months suspension of work effective Jan 15.
- Issuance of approved permits (APs) frozen since last week.
- Better coordination among federal and state agencies to ensure directive is followed.
- Crackdown on illegal bauxite mining sites.
- Proposal to increase number of personnel at the state Minerals and Geoscience Department for better enforcement.
- Improvement to the regulation and terms and conditions of bauxite mining and export.
- New terms and conditions to be enforced after the three months' stop-work order.
- Department of Environment established six ad-hoc stations to monitor the water quality at the affected areas (Sungai Riau, Sungai Mabok and Sungai Pinang) due to high concentration of aluminium, mercury and iron.
- Proposal to set up integrated stockpile centre for bauxite to better control the logistic; ensure no more piles of bauxites at Kuantan Port to minimise environmental impact.



## NGOs laud govt's decision to ban bauxite mining

**KUANTAN:** The three-month moratorium on bauxite mining will give the government and contractors sufficient time to identify and resolve problems, including pollution.

Bukit Goh Bauxite Coordinating Committee chairman Datuk Dr Abd Wahid Abd Manap said the govern-

ment could send officials to carry out inspections and draft a standard operation procedure to be followed by all parties concerned.

"As the government has decided on a temporary ban, the operators should obey.

"Three months is enough time to look for solutions.

"A set of guidelines, including measures to improve the system in Kuantan Port can ensure smooth operations.

He said the government should consider starting the moratorium at the end of the month instead of Jan 15 to allow miners to meet their contract obligations and clear bauxite stockpiles.

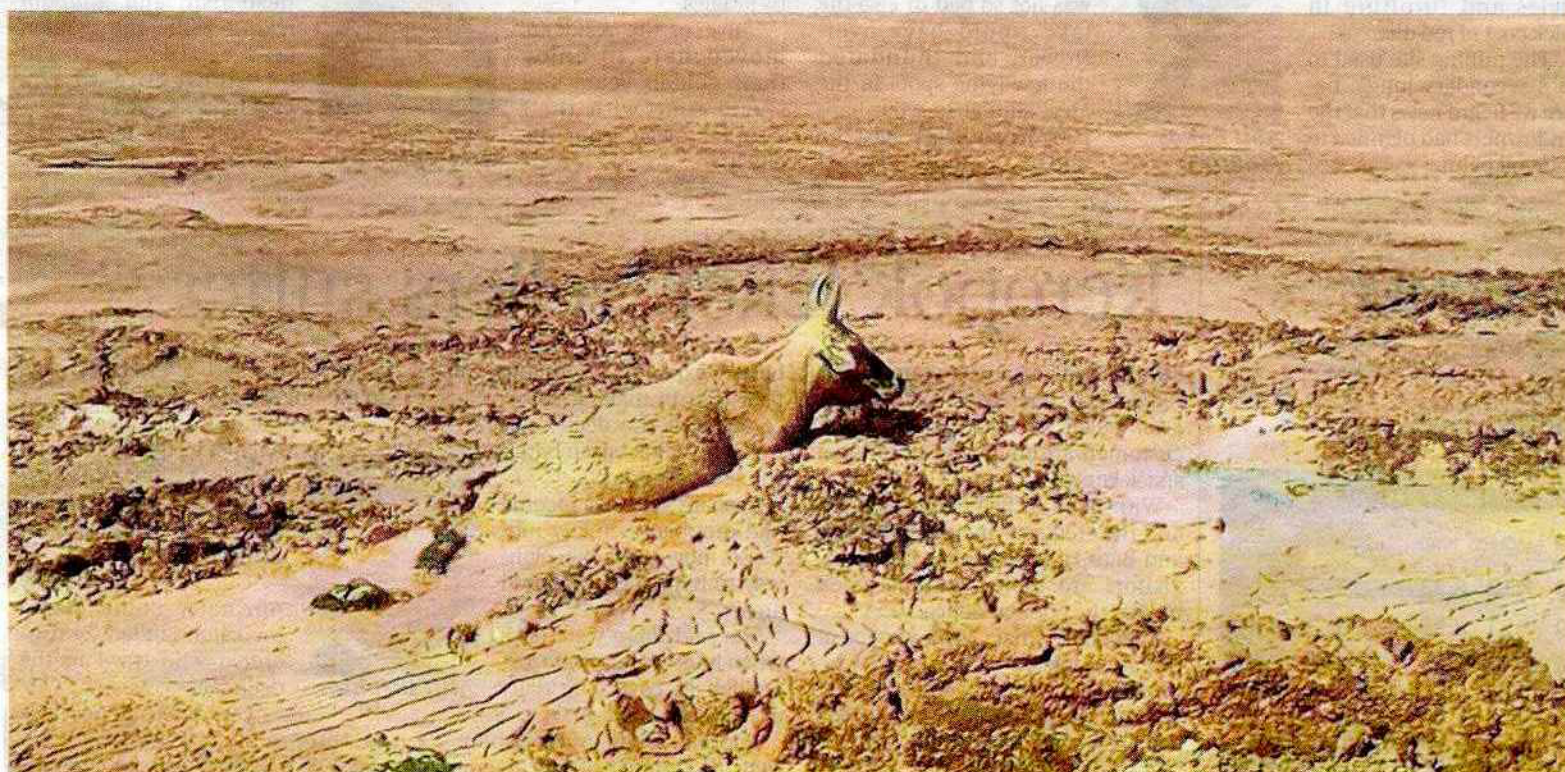
Yesterday, Malaysian Nature Society (MNS) said the temporary ban was long overdue.

Its council member, Noor Jehan Abu Bakar, said the people here had been waiting for a respite from bauxite pollution.

She said the moratorium was necessary because of the scale of the pollution caused by the mining operations.

"The three months will allow for a comprehensive plan to be drawn up with a new standard operating procedure."

In Kuala Lumpur, Malaysian Environmental NGOs (Mengo) urged the local authorities to take action against irresponsible parties that had caused bauxite mining-related pollution in Pahang.



**A cow trapped in the mud at a bauxite mining area in Felda Bukit Goh, Kuantan, yesterday. Pic courtesy of Pertubuhan Pelindung Khazanah Alam Malaysia**