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Media Statement

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**State Authorities Should be Stringent in Curbing Illegal Activities
in Permanent Reserved Forests and State Land**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) urges the Kelantan State Authority to take stringent action to curb encroachment and illegal exploration activities for mining purposes in the Permanent Reserved Forests (PRF) and state land especially during the movement control order (MCO).

Although Malaysia is still implementing the MCO, the State Authority should direct the relevant agencies to take proactive action upon receiving public complaints or reports published by the media.

SAM is disappointed with the recent statement by Kelantan Deputy Chief Minister Dato' Mohd Amar that no action could be taken by the relevant agencies with regards to the illegal mining activities in the Jedok Forest Reserve (HS Jedok) because they are restricted by the MCO. Whereas in some other states, the relevant agencies are taking proactive action upon receiving complaints from the public.

SAM is concerned after learning from a report in Bulletin TV3 that the illegal mining activity in HS Jedok, perpetrated by a group of foreigners, is believed to be for the production of thorium.

In addition to the risk of exposure to radioactive material, this mining activity would also disrupt and destroy areas classified as Virgin Jungle Reserve (VJR) in Compartment 7 of the forest reserve because the distance from the main road to the VJR is relatively close.

Therefore, SAM hopes that the State Authority through the relevant agencies will take more proactive, stringent and decisive actions against the irresponsible parties in accordance with existing legal provisions.

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