



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Media Statement

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INVESTIGATE POLLUTION OF SUNGAI KELUANG IN PENANG

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) urged the Department of Environment and Penang Island City Council (MBPP) to immediately investigate the discharge of white foamy substance that is polluting Sungai Keluang near Bayan Lepas Industrial Zone in Penang.

CAP is concerned about the content of the foamy substance because if it contains hazardous chemicals it can cause adverse effects to the environment, threaten fishermen's source of income and potentially affect public health.

In a field survey conducted by CAP after receiving a complaint from a passer-by, CAP found that the foamy discharge flows into Sungai Keluang from the Bayan Lepas industrial zone through a channel located in the area and is dispersed to the nearby sea and fishing area.

CAP believes that if follow-up investigation and immediate actions are not taken by the relevant authorities on pollution from industrial areas, there would be a repeat of serious effects of pollution such that had occurred in Sungai Juru in Seberang Perai Tengah (SPT) district in the past and Sungai Kim Kim in Johor recently.

Toxic waste that threatened both Sungai Juru and Sungai Kim Kim not only affected the livelihoods of fisher communities in the area but the fish and shellfish that are their main source of income have died and become extinct.

In Kuala Kedah, in the state of Kedah in the early 1980s chemical pollution from a pesticide factory in Kampung Padang had damaged paddy cultivated by nearby farmers and their family health was also affected.

CAP is disappointed that in most of the pollution cases, the responsible authorities had failed to detect the source of pollution earlier before the situation became worse, as occurred in Pasir Gudang, Johor recently.

CAP therefore urges the DOE and MBPP in collaboration with the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID) conduct more frequent monitoring in all industrial areas and rivers in Penang to ensure that the factories operating here are in compliance with existing laws. Cumulative pollution from an industrial area should be taken into account because of the burden of pollution that the water bodies such as rivers need to bear.

The findings of investigation on the Sungai Keluang pollution should be publicly disclosed as soon as possible.

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Acting President
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