



**Sahabat Alam Malaysia**  
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For Environmental Justice

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**Press Statement**

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### **SAND MINING: BATANG BENAR RIVER HEAVILY SEDIMENTED**

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) urges the Negeri Sembilan government, Land & Mines Office (PTG), local authority, Drainage & Irrigation Department (DID) and the Department of Environment (DOE) to investigate and take immediate action to curb the pollution of the Batang Benar River which has been severely sedimented.

In a survey conducted by SAM, we found that the sedimentation was due to sand mining activity conducted at the river. The river has become murky with sediment. Parts of the river were seriously silted.

SAM is concerned because sand mining operations can cause direct impacts to the environment in terms of pollution of river water, threatening river banks and soil stability, causing siltation, contributing to the degradation of aquatic life and riparian vegetation, and alter natural flow of the river. Flash floods may also occur.

SAM hopes that the relevant authorities will halt the sand mining operations in the river to conduct an investigation and detailed study on the environmental impacts.

SAM views that the road, infrastructure and settlements downstream will be affected if erosion and collapse of river banks occurs as a result of the sand mining activities.

Hence SAM urges the PTG, DID, DOE and local authority to monitor all sand mining locations to ensure that the sand miners adhere to guidelines.

SAM asserts that sand miners must not cause damage to the environment and adverse effects to the public. Those who violate the rules and conditions must be penalised and their permits revoked.

SAM has sent letters to the various departments involved, including the State Secretary to carry out immediate investigation and take effective action to address this problem.

On another note SAM welcomes the enforcement action carried out by the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency who had towed away a sand dredger and arrested crew members for mining sand beyond the permitted zone of the seawater near Tanjong Dawai, Kedah recently.

In Malaysia and worldwide, sand is being extracted at a rate far greater than their renewal. The volume being extracted is having a major impact on rivers, deltas and coastal and marine ecosystems. In view of the indisputable negative effects, we need to improve the extraction governance and put a stop to the exploitation of our natural resources.

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