



KERATAN AKHBAR

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Wan Junaidi: No logging or mining activity in Tasik Chini

PETALING JAYA: There have been no logging activities or bauxite mining in Tasik Chini since 2014 contrary to a newspaper report, said Datuk Seri Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar.

"I want to clarify that the report on Tasik Chini was based on its condition from 2009 to 2013 and it does not reflect its current condition," said the Natural Resources and Environment Minister in a statement yesterday.

Dr Wan Junaidi said the aerial footage of the supposed logging activities was taken in 2013.

"After the floods in 2014, the Government made several efforts to restore the surrounding areas in Tasik Chini," he said.

On Saturday, a Malay daily reported that Tasik Chini – recognised as a biosphere reserve by UNESCO – was plagued by uncontrolled logging, mining and farming activities.

He said a Conservation and Preservation Steering Committee was set up at the East Coast Economic Region Development Council meeting in March 2016 to identify the causes contributing to the deterioration of Tasik Chini and the steps taken to rectify the situation.

Among the responsibilities of the committee to protect Tasik Chini was to ensure mining activities were carried out responsibly and that forest conservation initiatives be conducted through its reforestation programmes.

"Two operations have also been successfully implemented to protect the rich biodiversity in Tasik Chini by preventing intrusions and ensuring its water quality achieves Class 1 status by 2019," he said.

"Monthly monitoring of its water quality has seen the majority of its stations achieving a Class 2 status and the return of marine life."

Dr Wan Junaidi added that no logging licences had been issued.

"Up to now, there have only been two iron mines that are still active after being approved by the Pahang state government in 2010," said Dr Wan Junaidi, adding that the mines were 5km away from Tasik Chini.

He also said the initiatives implemented by the ministry to preserve the area included the monitoring of the water quality of the lake, strengthening of the banks of the lake, and the preservation of plants by various authorities.