



SURAT KHABAR	:	NEW STRAITS TIMES
TARIKH	:	15/4/2019
JABATAN	:	KATS / BMG / JMG / JKPTG / BAUKSIT
KLASIFIKASI	:	<b>PERHATIAN</b>

## MONITORING COMMITTEE

# BAUXITE E-ADUAN CHANNEL FOR REDRESS

People's complaints will be resolved within set period, says SOP panel chief

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**O**NCE bauxite mining operations resume, the public will be able to channel any related complaint through an e-aduan (e-complaints) website.

Bauxite standard operating procedure (SOP) executive review committee chairman Professor Datuk Dr Azizan Abu Samah said the complaints would be attended to by both the Water, Land and Natural Resources Ministry at federal level and Land and Mines Office at

state level.

He said e-complaints received via e-aduan had to be looked into and solved within a certain time-frame, and a monitoring committee that was to be set up soon would ensure everything was done accordingly.

"The committee will comprise elected representatives, village community management council leaders and representatives from government agencies who will meet every two months to look into whether the complaints have been attended to and the solution.

"We will emphasise the e-aduan as a platform for the public to express their concerns.

"Since the e-aduan will be managed both by the ministry and state, we have to identify a suitable

structure but both will have the same objective (to solve problems raised by the public)," he said after a public hearing and engagement with stakeholders in the bauxite mining industry at the Sultan Ahmad Shah Silver Jubilee hall.

Azizan said there must be transparency and engagement with the public so that they would be aware of the latest bauxite-related issues.

"There is no use hiding any data... all findings should be published on the (relevant) websites.

"All the input gathered (at the public hearing) will be considered for inclusion in the final SOP draft.

"The public can also provide their input in written form to the executive review committee by the end of the month before the

final draft is handed to the ministry.

"In my opinion, an SOP can be improvised as time passes as the main aim is to ensure there is no repeat of the incidents in the past (bauxite dust pollution).

"The SOP will be effective only if the enforcement is carried out strictly. So to ensure everything falls into place, we need the support of all agencies to ensure there are no loopholes in the process," he said.

On the need to have a trial run for bauxite mining, Azizan said he would prefer the SOP be finalised before checking if there was a need for further improvements.

"We want to see if there will be problems and find suitable ways to overcome them.

"Carrying out bauxite mining is not a major issue and it can be done in a sustainable manner.

"Bauxite mining is carried out in Pengerang in Johor, and there

seems to be no problem. It's not about not being allowed to mine bauxite but how one carries out the mining systematically," he said.

Azizan, who admitted that poor enforcement led to the pollution in 2016, said the executive review committee was confident that the newly-introduced SOP would provide more confidence to the community and mining could be done in a sustainable manner without causing problems like before.

Kuantan member of parliament Fuziah Salleh said a new mechanism had to be introduced to ensure there was no overlapping of duties between the state and federal governments.

"There should be no finger-pointing. Instead, everyone should be well-versed with their scope of duties.

"Prevention is better than cure and the public's safety has to always be the priority."



Professor Datuk Dr Azizan Abu Samah