



KERATAN AKHBAR

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Govt to test new SOP for bauxite mining

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KUALA LUMPUR: The government has proposed a six-month period to test the effectiveness of the new standard operating procedure (SOP) for mining and exporting bauxite before allowing full-scale mining operations in Pahang.

Water, Land and Natural Resources Minister Dr Xavier Jayakumar said they would review the effectiveness of the new SOP before deciding the next cause of action on the activities.

"The SOP, which covers from pre-mining to post-mining, is to ensure it can be implemented sustainably and an added value to the economy."

He said a few operators had been allowed to carry out mining activities in Gebeng, near Kuantan, under the new SOP.

He told Che Alias Hamid (PAS-Kemaman) during question time that the government would determine the effectiveness of the new SOP before allowing mining operations to resume in Pahang and elsewhere.

Dr Xavier said they would also consider feedback from all stakeholders including locals, industry players, non-governmental organisations, resident associations, among others.

"The SOP will impose stringent regulations in terms of application, transport, centered stockpile, and export," he said.

He added the implementation of the new SOP also makes it compulsory for operators to have approved Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report.

He warned that the government would terminate the operating permit of any bauxite operators if they failed to follow the new SOP.

When met at the Parliament lobby, Dr Xavier said three local companies had applied for bauxite mining licences.

He added the applicants also comprised companies, which had previously carried out bauxite mining in Kuantan.

"We expect to issue to licences by December or early January," he said.

At present, the mining quota stood at 600 metric tons, an amount of bauxite the Kuantan port can handle.