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ASSURANCE FROM MINISTER

KINTA VALLEY TO KEEP GEO-PARK STATUS

This despite reports of quarrying near the area

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KINTA Valley's national geo-park status will not be revoked, despite reports of quarrying near the area.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah said the ministry, through the Department of Mineral and Geoscience, would continue to help the state government maintain the status.

"This includes conducting research to add information on geo-site sources and geo-park development.

"Kinta Valley Geo-park is slightly different. It does not hinder economic development, but do not let its geo-park status be affected since an assessment is done every year.

"If someone violates (the assessment), it will result in the withdrawal of its status.

"But I am confident that this will not happen to Kinta Valley," he said after visiting Gua Matsoorat and Gunung Lang Recreational Park here yesterday.

Present were the ministry's secretary-general, Datuk Zurinah Pawanteh, and Department of Mineral and Geoscience Malaysia deputy director-general Hisa-

muddin Termidi.

The re-evaluations of the status, he said, would be done this year since it was last evaluated in 2017.

It was reported that pictures of quarrying at limestone hills — Gunung Lanno, Gunung Terundum and Gunung Rapat — had gone viral and sparked a backlash against the state government.

Environmentalists claimed the quarrying had marred the image of Ipoh and its surrounding areas, as well as jeopardising the flora and fauna.

Kinta Valley is the country's second national geo-park after Langkawi's Unesco Global Geopark, Kedah.

On Oct 25, 2018, Sultan of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah had graced the declaration of



Energy and Natural Resources Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shamsul Anuar Nasarah (second from right) being briefed on Gua Matsoorat in Kinta Valley, Ipoh, yesterday. BERNAMA PIC

Kinta Valley, with the size of 1,952 sq km, as a national geopark geological site.

Shamsul said Gunung Lanno, Gunung Terundum and Gunung Rapat had been gazetted under the Mineral/Rock Basic Industry Economic Zone in the Batu Gajah District Council Local Plan 2025.

"We understand there is a need (quarrying) for development to increase the state's income, but at the same, we must abide by the rules."

He said Gua Matsoorat, which is near Gunung Lang here, would be the 19th geo-site in Kinta Valley Geopark.

"We have 18 geo-sites in Perak and I believe efforts are ongoing to enable Gua Matsoorat to be recognised as a geo-site as it has high value and many features.

"I hope we will get full cooperation from the state government to enable Gua Matsoorat to become the 19th geo-site in Kinta Valley Geopark."