



KERATAN SURAT KHABAR

SURAT KHABAR	:	NST			
TARIKH	:	16/6/2021	MUKA SURAT	:	11
JABATAN	:	KeTSA			

IMMEDIATE STEPS

Pahang begins work to widen Chini forest reserve

KUANTAN: Pahang started initiatives yesterday to expand the Chini permanent forest reserve in Pekan as instructed by the Regent of Pahang Tengku Hassanal Ibrahim Alam Shah Al-Sultan Abdullah.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail said the State Land and Mines Office and Forestry Department had been instructed to take immediate action to identify the potential new sites to be gazetted.

"The agencies will identify the new areas and work towards gazetting it. The expansion is necessary to maintain, preserve and conserve the quality of the areas near Tasik Chini where the water body area (lake, wetland) alone measures between 200 and 700ha depending on the season.

"The move to widen the Chini forest reserve will certainly ensure greater effectiveness to-

wards efforts to meet the requirements of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (Unesco)," he said in a statement yesterday.

On Monday, Tengku Hassanal, who visited Tasik Chini on Sunday following extensive reports and images of the mining activities at the lake which went viral on social media, ordered the existing permanent reserve forest measuring 4,600ha to be widened to around 6,000 or 7,000ha.

The regent, who described Tasik Chini as an environmental jewel of Pahang, said increasing the Chini permanent forest reserve would help safeguard the flora and fauna found near the lake and the surrounding areas.

The Pahang government, during the state executive council meeting on March 13, 2019, had gazetted an area measuring 4,498ha within the Tasik Chini



The Pahang Land and Mines Office and Forestry Department have been instructed to identify potential new sites to be gazetted at Tasik Chini, says Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Wan Rosdy Wan Ismail. FILE PIC

state park as a permanent forest reserve.

Meanwhile, Wan Rosdy said the state government would continue its replanting activities, including the reforestation conducted near the lake.

"We have spent about RM250,000 to restore the greenery and about RM10 million more will be allocated.

"Enforcement will be stepped up, including monitoring with Lidar (light detection radar). Enforcement agencies at both state

and federal levels will be roped in for regular monitoring," he said.

Wan Rosdy said immediate efforts were being taken by the state government to adhere to orders issued by the regent to provide better protection for Tasik Chini, the country's second largest freshwater lake.

"The measures instructed by the regent displays his concern towards the state's affairs. Expanding the permanent forest reserve up to 7,000ha will ensure a more effective Tasik Chini bio-

sphere reserve and safeguard its world-class recognition."

On Monday, Tengku Hassanal had called to cease all mining activities at Tasik Chini and the former mining sites be rehabilitated by planting suitable forest trees.

Tasik Chini came under the spotlight last week after news emerged that the Pahang state government had given the green light for mining operations in the vicinity of Tasik Chini to a royalty-linked company.