



Meet to solve K'batangan pollution once and for all

KOTA KINABALU: State Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Masidi Manjun said a meeting with the Environment Protection Department (EPD) will be held next week to once and for all address the pollution problem at the Kinabatangan River Basin.

The meeting would discuss a new strategy to combat the problem created by palm oil millers along the basin who have been giving him excuses on the issue.

"I have been fair to these millers and they have been giving me so many excuses. This is not a good habit. So many years I have been waiting for them to deliver their promises," he said, Monday.

On Aug. 25, Plantation Industries and Commodities Minister, Tan Sri Bernard Dompok said he would allow the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB) to suspend the licences and shut down the operations of errand millers.

This is if the millers did not follow the prescribed Department of

Environment (DOE) Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD3) discharge level of 20ppm on sensitive areas.

However, the Ministry still needs recommendation from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment to do so.

The matter came about after tourism operators and non-government organisations lambasted Dompok as well as Natural Resources and Environment Deputy Minister, Tan Sri Joseph Kurup, of literally doing nothing, despite being Sabah's representatives at Federal level, about the effluents from mills being discharged into the Kinabatangan river.

The pollution issue, largely due to the discharge from oil palm mills, would not only kill the wildlife in Kinabatangan but also affect the State's billion ringgit tourism industry.

Dompok said there are also other activities that are causing the high levels of BOD3 in the river such as agriculture, population spots and also lodges and resorts. - JS