PRIME NEWS

Sand miners driven by profits

STOP-WORK ORDER:
Authorities again bust illegal sand mining activity in Bukit Beruntung

NABIZ MOHID
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Five illegal sand miners risked their lives by jumping into Sungai Selangor in Bukit Beruntung, Rawang, here to escape from authorities yesterday.

The suspects, in their 30s and 40s, were earlier busy excavating the sand at a riverbank at Kampung Timah here when a raiding team from the Selangor Water Management Board (Luas) and the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) swooped in at 3pm.

Although the team was there to serve a stop-work order and evacuation notice, the startled men, including three Indonesians, thought they were about to be detained and quickly made their escape by jumping into the river. Luckily for them, the men managed to swim safely across the 10m-wide river and after reaching the opposite bank, they fled on foot.

Luas enforcement division officer Zulkifli Idrus said they were there to check on the illegal operation after getting a tip-off.

He said the stop-work order and the notice were served on the land owner.

"Even if the river runs through the property, the owner still needs a permit from Luas to conduct sand-mining activities."

The illegal sand-mining activity in Kampung Timah, Bukit Beruntung, which was raided by the Selangor Water Management Board and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission yesterday. (Inset) A worker risking his life by jumping into the river to escape the authorities.

"Any river in Selangor is gazetted as state government reserve," he said.

Zulkifli said they had busted a similar operation at the site in 2009, but the activities resumed about six months ago.

"We've ordered the work to stop and the owner has a week to take the machinery out of the site." It is learnt that the operation netted up to 15 lorry-loads of sand daily for between RM450 and RM500 per load.