Operator busted
MACC and Luas also nab five workers at sand-mining site

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A N I ILLEGAL sand-mining operator and five workers have been caught red-handed in SKC Bukit Timah, Rawang.
The Selangor Water Management Authority (Luas) and Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) stormed the area after cutting the lock at the site’s entrance gate.

Three workers, who escaped by swimming across Sungai Selangor leaving behind their handphones and wallets, were arrested.

Another two workers stood on floating barrels in the middle of the river refusing to come ashore.

Luas officers negotiated with the two workers for about 20 minutes before one of them came to talk to the authorities.

Luas assistant enforcement officer Dzukiifly Idra said they seized a dynamo, starter and batteries from the pump.

Shahrin Nordin, a Luas legal officer, said the operator was fined RM3,500 for machinery seized for draining water from the river without permission.

"In 2009, we also fined the operator RM5,000 for the same offence," he said.

An MACC officer, who did not wish to be named, said the operator had been mining sand for the last three years and no action had been taken by the Hulu Selangor Land Office.

"The land office need to repossess the land as it is meant for agriculture. The operator came back to the site despite many raids," he said.

Hulu Selangor Land Office district officer Nor Hisham Ahmad Dahlan said his department had raided the site several times in the last three years but found no one or machinery there.

"Someone has been informing the operator of our raids and it is difficult to get into the site with.

From Monday onwards, we will place a tent at the site and not allow any machinery to be taken out."

NOR HISHAM AHMAD DAHLAN

A four-wheel drive vehicle was taken out a sand-mining operation in SKC Bukit Timah that was said to be the biggest, measuring three football pitches.

Despite the report, the thieves are still willing to take the risk of the sand price in Selangor could fetch about RM30 per tonne.