

Dept: River sand illegally mined

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2,000 metric tonnes have been removed

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IPOH: An estimated 2,000 metric tonnes of river sand have been illegally mined and stolen from Tebing Tinggi in Selama, said Perak Land and Mines Department assistant director Kamarulariffin Ayub.

He said between 50 and 100 lorries had been siphoning the sand from the site, about 120km from here, over the course of two weeks.

Kamarulariffin said the illegal operation was finally shut down after enforcement officers raided the site at about 7.30pm on Tuesday.



End game: Enforcement officers and police shutting down the illegal sand mining operation.

He said information about the site was obtained from two lorry drivers who were detained earlier for transporting sand beyond operating hours.

Kamarulariffin said the operation time allowed for mining and

transferring stoneworks is between 8am and 6pm.

“One of the lorry drivers even tried to deceive the enforcement officers by showing a docket purportedly issued by the Kedah Land and Mines Department director.”

After interrogating the drivers, the enforcement team went to the site and saw an excavator in the process of extracting sand.

Kamarulariffin said they immediately called for reinforcements and the police to assist in the raid.

“There were tontos there, too, and they tried to stop us from seizing the excavator.

“We were only able to do so when the police arrived,” he said, adding that the machine was taken to the district office.

He said they were still trying to remove a sand pump from the site.

Kamarulariffin added that the two lorries, which were stopped before the raid, were carrying some 20 metric tonnes of sand.

“As they have been operating for the past two weeks, we estimate that 2,000 metric tonnes had already been taken out illegally,” he said, adding that the loss was valued at about RM5,000.