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Kedah must conduct impact study on environment before proceeding with REE extraction



By Sharifah Mahsinah Abdullah - December 8, 2020 @ 6:50pm



Dr Abdul Hafidz Yusoff, the Kedah government should conduct a thorough study, including on the environmental impact of mining activities before adopting any decision.

KOTA BARU: Kedah must look into the impact of the extraction of rare earth elements (REE) on the environment before any permit to explore such activities are issued.

A senior lecturer with the Energy, Mineral and Material Technology Department at the Faculty of Bioengineering and Technology at Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK) said a study on the matter was important to prevent any potential damage to the environment.

As such, said Dr Abdul Hafidz Yusoff, the Kedah government should conduct a thorough study, including on the environmental impact of mining activities before adopting any decision.

"The move by the Kedah government is a good initiative as it will help develop the REE mining industry in the state as well to increase the state's economic resources.

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"But the government must know the method and the measures utilised in the mining works.

"In Malaysia, there is a law set by the Mineral and Geoscience Department whereby the use of concentrated acid is prohibited in REE mining to preserve the environment.

"The department is responsible for monitoring and planning the activities related to REE mining," said Hafidz, who is also the director of UMK's Research Management Division.

Apart from the department, he said the Kedah government can also refer the matter with several other research centres such as those in Universiti Malaysia Pahang and UMK itself.

It was reported that a local company based in Kuala Lumpur had been awarded a permit to explore and extract REE in Kedah.

Menteri Besar Muhammad Sanusi Md Nor was reported to have said Kedah has mineral deposits estimated to be worth RM62 billion throughout the state and the company was given approval last week to carry out exploration work in one area in the state.

However, he did not state the estimated value of the mineral deposits involved in the area and when the company would carry out exploration.

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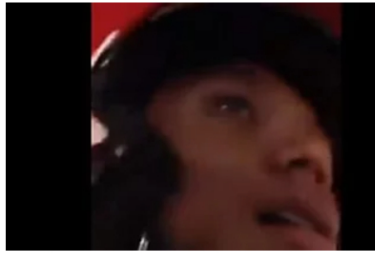
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