

Sungai Juru is still as dirty

There's no clean-up activity, says Tan

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FRIENDS of Sungai Juru have questioned the condition of the river that has not seen any changes, especially its level of contamination, despite an RM18mil allocation by the federal government to rehabilitate it.

Friends of Sungai Juru co-ordinator Tan Chai Liang said the allocation was announced during Parliament session on Sept 7 in 2006 by the then Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment parliamentary secretary Sazmi Miah.

"However, until now, I have not seen any changes to the condition of the river that has been listed as one of the dirtiest rivers in the country.

"In fact, I pass by the river every day when I go back to my house in Taman Juru from Prai but sad to say there is no activity to clean up or beautify the river," he said.

Tan said the RM18mil was part of the RM107mil approved by the Government to rehabilitate rivers in Penang under the 9th Malaysia Plan.

He said he had written to Local Government, Traffic Management and Environment committee chairman Chow Kon Yeow enquiring

about the allocation and details of the contract if it had been awarded to anyone.

"I have also invited Chow to visit the Sungai Juru dam and see for himself the condition of the river and pollution," he said.

Tan who is a strong campaigner on environment preservation had taken his own initiative to set up a special website on Sungai Juru.

The website can be accessed at www.sungaijuru.com

Sungai Juru is located about 12km south-east of Butterworth, somewhere between the Penang Bridge and the site of the ongoing second

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TAN CHAI LIANG



link project.

The river has been classified by the Department of Environment as the most polluted river in the country while the World Health Organisation in its report had listed Sungai Juru as the dirtiest in South East Asia.

WHO in its report said the water in Sungai Juru was so toxic that it was unsafe for drinking even after it was boiled.

State Drainage and Irrigation Department director Hanapi Mohamad Nor said the department had been given approval to appoint a contractor for the Sungai Juru rehabilitation project.

He said the appointed contractor would be asked to design and build the project, adding that it would be implemented this year.

"We have identified the contractor and are waiting for his design," he said.