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**DR ADHAM: LYNAS GIVEN UNTIL MARCH NEXT YEAR TO BUILD
PERMANENT DISPOSAL FACILITY**

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BY RADZI RAZAK



The Lynas Advanced Materials Plant is seen in this general view taken in Gebeng, Pahang July 23, 2019. — Reuters pic

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 23 — Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba confirmed today that Lynas Corp was given until March next year to construct a permanent disposal facility (PDF) for their Rare Earth Mine in Pahang.

He said that the Australian company had submitted environmental impact assessment (EIA) and regulatory impact assessment (RIA) reports to the Atomic Energy Licensing Board (AELB) earlier this month for the matter.

“Lynas must build a PDF to house the Water Leach Purification residue as stated by AELB.

“Lynas has already submitted two EIA and RIA reports and has reached the AELB desk in September and needs to be completed by the end of December and we allow until March next year,” he told the Dewan Rakyat today.

Adham was responding to questions from Wong Tack (Bentong-PH) who asked about the development of the Lynas issue.

Wong then stood up and asked why the government is still allowing the mine to operate even as the PDF matter was in contention for about 10 years and had become the main condition over their temporary operating license by AELB in 2012.

“They did not do it from day one,” he said, referring to Lynas.

“In 2018, AELB again told them to construct PDF as soon as possible. It has been almost 10 years.”

During PH’s administration, Lynas announced that its rare earth processing plant at Gebeng, Kuantan, has received a three-year extension of the operating licence, until early March 2023 under four conditions including the construction of a PDF within the first year.

However, Lynas informed the Australian Securities and Exchange in August of the new six-month extension to March 2, 2022.

The company said the Malaysian government decided to provide an extension because it recognised the constraints presented by the current Covid-19 situation.

Wong then accused Adham’s predecessor Khairy Jamaluddin of not keeping his word on Lynas Rare Earths’ licence revocation.