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Decision on Lynas facility to be known soon

New Straits Times, Malaysia



Page 1 of 2

INITIAL ASSESSMENT

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THE decision on the initial assessment for Lynas' proposed permanent disposal facility (PDF) in Gebeng Industrial Area is expected to be known next month, the Dewan Rakyat was told yesterday.

Science, Technology and Innovation Minister Datuk Seri Dr Adham Baba said the environmental impact assessment (EIA) and radiological impact assessment had been submitted to the Atomic Energy Licensing Board (AELB) and the Environment Department for assessment in September.

"They need about two months. It was submitted in September and we will make a decision in November," he said in reply to a supplementary question from Wong Tack (PH-Bentong).

Dr Adham said the construc-

tion of the PDF by Lynas, which had its operating license renewed until 2023, was subject to conditions and studies that covered all safety aspects.

He said the government was steadfast in its stand to protect the country from radioactive pollution.

To a supplementary question from Fuziah Salleh (PH-Kuantan), he said the proposed site was classified as low-risk for floods.

"I would also like to inform that the area was not hit by the huge flood in 2014.

"The site has also been raised by five metres from the sea level."

The development of the PDF that would be carried out within a year was one of the conditions imposed by the government in



The Lynas plant at Gebeng, Kuantan. After July 2023, Lynas will no longer be allowed to import raw materials containing naturally occurring radioactive material into Malaysia. FILE PIC

granting a three-year extension of the licence for the controversial Lynas rare earths plant last year.

The conditions among others required the Australian firm to submit a work development plan for the construction of the PDF and report on its development status as determined by AELB, and ensure that the cracking and leaching plant outside

Malaysia is in operation before July 2023.

After that period, Lynas will no longer be allowed to import raw materials containing naturally occurring radioactive material into Malaysia.

The public have previously raised possible health and environmental impacts due to the radioactive waste from the mining and refinery activities.



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SUMMARIES

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