



UPDATE:

Pakatan Rakyat's stand, released on Friday, can be found [here](#) .

By Dr Kua Kia Soong, Director of SUARAM, 1 Feb 2012

In the light of the statement by Lynas Executive Chairman Nicholas Curtis dismissing Kuantan MP Fuziah Salleh's view as “*only one view within what would make up the political coalition against the government and said the main opposition PAS party supported the Lynas plant*”

”, we call upon the Pakatan Rakyat leadership to state their stand on the Lynas plant at Gebeng if they come into power after the next elections.

The Lynas spokesman further stated that he did not consider the Kuantan MP’s views to reflect the PAS party position at all nor did her view represent that of PKR’s policy either, saying it would not be stable for foreign direct investment in Malaysia were that situation to occur.

Pakatan Rakyat cannot stall on this issue any longer because Lynas is currently awaiting a temporary license to start operating the rare earths plant and is expected to receive a decision from the cabinet next week, based on whether the plant meets safety standards for handling radioactive material. The plant is 91 percent complete and is due to start processing rare earths from Lynas’ Mount Weld mine in 2012.

A policy statement by the PR top leadership will thus assuage the deep concern of the people over this toxic Lynas plant and force Lynas to think again about exporting their polluting industry into this country.

PR’s policy statement on all toxic industries

With the 13th general elections approaching, it is vital that Pakatan Rakyat states clearly its policy regarding such foreign investments in toxic industries in our country. Besides this Lynas project in the peninsula, the Sarawak government is also desperately trying to attract energy-intensive toxic industries such as aluminium smelting and bauxite processing to soak up the excess capacity from the Bakun dam.

These energy-intensive industries are just waiting for the most attractive tariffs before they commit their investments. Thus, while Sarawakians face the prospect of living with these highly toxic industries in their backyard, Malaysian tax payers as a whole will bear the cost of subsidizing these foreign investors whose own countries deter such investments in toxic electricity guzzling industries.

The people of Kuantan are rightly angry that their lives are being reckoned on a weighted scale and they do not want this toxic industry in their backyard. All Malaysians who care for people before profits fully support them and we must do all we can to ensure that Lynas processes the rare earth in their own backyard and not in ours. The people of Kuantan have asserted their rights as a community. It underpins the inseparable connection between the environmental movement and the peoples' movement for democracy, justice and human rights.

Pakatan Rakyat must thus state in no uncertain terms their policy toward such highly toxic industries not only in the peninsula but also in East Malaysia now!