



กรมควบคุมมลพิษ
POLLUTION CONTROL DEPARTMENT

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KLITY CREEK

Mining firm told to pay B6.8m damages

POST REPORTERS

Lead Concentrates Co has been ordered to pay 6.8 million baht in compensation to the Pollution Control Department (PCD) for releasing lead waste into the already-contaminated Klity Creek in Kanchanaburi, causing damage to people's health.

Surapong Kongchantuk, director of the Karen Studies and Development Centre, said yesterday the Supreme Court's Environmental Division has instructed the firm, its executives and executors of late executives to pay the aforementioned damages.

The department has also brought a civil suit against the company to the Court of Justice, demanding it pay a further 8.1 million baht in total to affected villagers and the department.

Mr Surapong said the agency has demanded 125,427 baht be paid to villagers who have been unable to use water from the heavily polluted creek; another 6.6 million baht be provided to cover their eating costs, as they have been unable to fish in the now-toxic watercourse; and 1.3 million baht be paid to the department to cover its management costs on the issue since 1998.

He also urged the department to demand additional compensation from the company as the agency earlier paid 454 million baht to Better World Green Pcl to clean up the creek over a period of 1,000 days in compliance with the Supreme

Administrative Court's previous order, which stipulated that the department was required to rehabilitate the creek from Jan 10, 2013 to Nov 1, 2017.

The department can file a suit with the Court of Justice if the company does not agree to pay the damages, he said.

Meanwhile, Mr Surapong said that in damaging a local waterway inside a forest reserve in Thong Pha Phum district, the company also breached the Promotion and Conservation of National Environmental Quality Act BE 2535.

As such, the PCD and associated agencies including the Royal Forest Department and the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation should demand the company pay even more damages, he suggested.

The lead contamination of Klity Creek was first exposed in 1998 when the Department of Mineral Resources ordered the closure of Lead Concentrates. The creek was contaminated by water illegally discharged from a nearby lead factory.

Three previous cases were lodged in connection with the creek. All reached settlements.

In January 2013, the Pollution Control Department paid nearly 4 million baht to 22 Karen villagers; it was ordered to pay another eight people 20.2 million baht in July 2015; and had to fork out 36 million baht to 151 villagers in Sept 2017.