

Beat: Politics

Save Malaysia Stop Lynas (SMSL)

Election Triumph of the Stop Lynas

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USPA NEWS - SMSL welcome the election of all candidates committed to the Stop Lynas cause in the Kuantan and surrounding areas near the Lynas plant at general election held on 5th May in Malaysia. Two members of parliament and 3 state assemblymen who had campaigned on the Lynas issue were all voted in.

SMSL spokesperson Mr Tan Bun Teet says, "This encouragingly positive election outcome for us is most rewarding as we have staged a concerted campaign to urge the public to vote to stop Lynas. It goes to show that the majority of the people here want to see the Lynas plant shut down." The five candidates won a comfortable and convincing majority in their respective seats delivering a clear message that the public have overwhelmingly rejected the Lynas rare earth processing plant near Kuantan. The plant owned by Australia's Lynas Corporation has yet to find a safe permanent site for its massive amount of radioactive and toxic waste to date. It has several serious deficiencies as shown in the detailed analysis and evaluation by Germany's Oeko

Institute - summary overleaf. Instead Lynas has proposed to turn its toxic waste into building and road paving materials as well as fertilisers which will result in its hazards spreading everywhere in Malaysia. This is a serious health and public safety issue for Malaysians in light of the poor track record of toxic waste management here. Haji Ismail Abu Bakar another SMSL spokesperson explained, "For the government to issue to Lynas the licence to operate when its risks and hazards have yet been dealt with properly is unacceptable. This is why the public has voted for the opposition candidates in Kuantan and in the area near the Lynas plant. We want to send a strong message to the Government that we want the Lynas project shut down."

Mr Tan and Haji Ismail are two of the Kuantan residents who have filed a judicial review case to revoke the Lynas temporary operating licence (TOL). This is in light of serious risks and problems related to the Lynas project which have been identified by health, scientific and engineering experts. "If the government or Lynas think that we will end our campaign to shut down the Lynas plant with the election, they are wrong. We are now moving into a new phase of the campaign. The people have given us the mandate to fight on. With this renewed energy and newly elected political representatives, we will soldier on to end this public hazard and ill-gotten project." Mr Tan asserted

Summary of the German Oeko Institute:

Lynas rare earth plant in Malaysia has some serious deficiencies

Solid waste management:

"The WLP waste with the highest radioactive content would exceed by a factor of more than 1,000 above internationally accepted protection levels for the release of radioactive materials from regulatory control (Beyond Regulatory Concern, BRC level).

"Any hopes that this waste can be re-used in the public domain are scientifically and technically nonsense and, with respect to the so posed risks, careless.

"The operation of a facility that generates those wastes should only be (temporarily or permanently) allowed if the permanent disposal facility (PDF) is available, otherwise another dangerous legacy is created

The fact that neither the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA, in its review) nor Lynas (in its Radioactive Waste Management Plan RWMP) nor the regulators AELB and MOSTI recognize, mention and respect the dose criteria and do not set this as their prime condition for any re-use scenario is irresponsible. Interim storage of wastes on-site: Lynas' Residue Storage Facilities (RSF) constructed with only 1 mm HDPE layer and a single 30 cm clay layer would not be allowed in Germany, not even for the lowest toxic waste categories. Leakage and seepage from the beginning of the storage period on will enter ground and groundwater under the RSFs will contaminate to an unknown extent because no experiments were made/published/presented to allow

or a thorough environmental evaluation. The poor layout of the RSFs should not have been accepted by the regulating agency. Other pollution risks and hazards:

“© The filtering equipment used by Lynas to reduce gaseous emissions from its cracking stage is not sufficient. Neither the removal of acidic gases nor of particulate matter from the off-gas of the plant would be acceptable. The wastewater of the plant has a high salt content, comparable to seawater. This content is not even mentioned in the Environmental Impact study nor is it evaluated. The wastewater flows into a several km long open channel, easily accessible by men and animals. Neither the salt nor the rare earth content of the wastewater is limited and monitored.

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