

'Restrict sale of formalin'

Sabah anglers: Chemical used to preserve fish sold in markets

KOTA KINABALU: Anglers here are calling for the authorities to restrict the use of formalin, claiming that the chemical has been utilised to preserve fish sold in markets in the state.

Sabah Anglers Association president Datuk Wilfred Lingham said formalin should be listed as a controlled item.

"From surveys carried out by our association, we found that almost 80% of consumers in Sabah in both rural and urban areas are eating formalin-tainted fish," he alleged.

Although such fish looked fresh when they were bought, Lingham said they would start to smell and break apart during frying.

"These are signs that the fish have been tainted with formalin," he claimed, adding that such use would continue as long as there was no

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— DATUK WILFRED LINGHAM

restriction on the sale of the chemical.

He also said an enzyme-based biosensor developed by Universiti Putra Malaysia could be used to detect formaldehyde, the solution used in the commercial production of formalin.

Meanwhile, Lingham said a festival of "formalin-free" fish would be held in the Tanjung Aru market between 8am and noon on Jan 26.

"Over 150kg of various frozen marine fish caught by association members will be available for sale in addition to 150kg of live, freshwater fish," he said.