



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பிளாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

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Press statement

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Stop the pussyfooting around plastic recycling pollution issue!

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) is aghast to have read a recent report of open burning of plastics in Relau, Penang. In fact we have also been informed of another case in Tanjong Bungah where plastics were burned in the early hours (about 4am).

We call on the government to completely weed out plastic recycling facilities that do not comply to the stringent guidelines available. The reasons are that:

- Usually only a small fraction of waste plastic (about 5 per cent) is recyclable while the rest of which had to be disposed. Normally illegal plastic recycling facilities have three 'cost effective' ways to disposed them: landfill (legal or illegal) and burning.
- The waste plastic needs to be cleaned and the process results in waste water that has to be treated before discharging into the environment.

Either methods of disposing plastic waste or the water that is used to clean/rinse the waste is contaminating the environment.

Such environmental violations have been going on in many states, particularly after China shut its door to the import of most recyclable plastics in 2017.

In view of the many cases of such happenings, the government should take firm action immediately on the factories involved. The government should set up a hotline for people to report illegal factories and their activities. Taskforce should also be formed to handle such problems without fear or favour. It is of utmost importance for the government to safeguard the health of the people.

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