



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Press Release

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CAP and SAM upset over EIA approval for Pan Island Link

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) and Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) are very upset by the Penang Chief Minister's announcement today that the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for the Pan-Island Link (PIL) has been approved by the Department of Environment (DOE) with 56 conditions.

We are also shocked that the DOE has approved the EIA despite the public feedback.

We were among many thousands of Penangites and groups who had voiced our deep concerns over the EIA, which had many flaws.

We totally disagree with the Chief Minister of Penang, Y.B. Chow, who claims that the PIL EIA approval marks a milestone in addressing the traffic woes in Penang.

The PIL is not a long term solution to our traffic problems. The EIA report claimed that there would be a dramatic time reduction but it ignored its own traffic analysis that full capacity will be reached by 2030, already. To spend an RM 8 billion for this road is a colossal waste of public resources that is not a long-term solution for our traffic woes.

Moreover, we had also pointed out that the EIA report wrongly claimed that no heritage structures would be affected. However, this is not true as the Por Tay Buddhist School, St. Nicholas home, Penang Chinese Girls' High School, Shree Muniswarar temple, the iconic Penang Hill railway, Kek Lok Si temple and the Air Itam dam – are all over 50 years old with cultural and historical significance, that will be adversely affected by the PIL.

The PIL, which is an elevated 6-lane highway will completely ruin the Island's charm as it will be a sight for sore-eyes, with adverse visual impact over green parks and forested hills.

The highway plans to canalize and straighten rivers, when globally, cities are trying to restore natural river flows.

In addition, the EIA report also did not address the heavy usage of two popular recreational parks, Youth Park and Taman Jajar, in the route of the elevated highway. Recreational users including children will be subjected to noise levels exceeding 75 dB, (recommended maximum is 60 dB) and increased air pollutants.

No amount of mitigation measures will address how the character of the Island will be changed, with such an elevated highway, which will certainly be very ugly.

We are totally shocked that the Penang State Government has refused to listen to a large section of the Penang public who had studied the EIA and who had given informed feedback and comments.

We reiterate our call to the Penang Government not to proceed with the PIL despite its conditional EIA approval.

We also demand that the government release the 56 conditions imposed by the DOE. Given the huge public outcry over the PIL, it is imperative that the State Government not hide the conditions for approval.

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