



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

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Letter to the Editor

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Old lifts must be replaced

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) is shockingly not shocked about the incident involving the lift at the Kampung Kerinchi PPR flat suddenly dropping 15m from the 5th floor to the ground floor. We had stressed in the past that the probability of accidents happening is higher since the period in between DOSH inspections of the lifts is too long, i.e. 15 months. This time they were lucky that the incident did not result in any deaths, only injuries.

To label the incident as a freak accident is irresponsible. Just because the lift cables did not snap, the brakes were working and the computer system was functioning does not mean that there is no problem, it is just that the problem is difficult to detect.

The lift in Kampung Kerinchi PPR flat is said to be 12 years old which can be considered reaching the end of its lifespan considering a lift's lifespan is between 12 and 20 years depending on the usage. Furthermore, the residents claim that the lift had broken down many times before.

Besides DOSH's inspection every 15 months, the owner of the lifts is also supposed to get DOSH certified contractors to maintain the lifts in between that time. However, we have received a complaint that competent contractors certified by DOSH that maintain the lifts tend to be reluctant to change parts in old lifts even though they keep breaking down and instead just keep "servicing" them. The excuse is that the parts are hard to come by and that the lifts seem to be "working" after the "servicing".

How can DOSH certify contractors/companies have this attitude and how can DOSH keep issuing CFs for lifts in these conditions? Perhaps this is what happened in the Kampung Kerinchi PPR flat case. So why not replace the old lifts with new ones?

During the time of the previous government there was a fund called Program Tabung Penyelenggaraan 1Malaysia (TP1M). The cost for certain things could be subsidised using the TP1M fund, one of them being the repair and replacement of lifts. The government would subsidise 90% of the cost for low cost flats and 70% of the cost for low-medium cost flats. What has happened to this fund?

People need to take safety measures more seriously and it must start with the authorities. In this case, lifts need to be inspected by DOSH inspectors earlier than 15 months and no compromises should be made by certified contractors or the authorities – old lifts must be replaced.

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