



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang Consumers Association of Penang

檳城消費人協會 பினாங்கு பயனீட்டாளர் சங்கம்

Websites:
www.consumer.org.my

10 Jalan Masjid Negeri, 11600 Pulau Pinang, Malaysia
Tel: 604-8299511 Fax: 604-8298109
email: consumerofpenang@gmail.com

Press Release

15 October 2017

Wake Up Call To Reduce And Solve Penang's Flood Problems

Alarmed by the impact of the recent floods that hit Penang on 15 September, several Residents Associations and community representatives have gathered together to make a collective call to the State Government of Penang, and their elected representatives to this time, take the situation of rainfall, floods and hill erosion very seriously.

The recent floods in Penang has exposed both short term and long term causes as well as measures needed to reduce and solve the flood problem.

The incidence of the floods in so many areas and the severity of the damage caused was shocking to Penangites, who have already been used to previous floods in the past. This time around, the severity and damage caused was most alarming, which caused much hardship and frustration.

Many communities were affected and in so many ways, including the following:

- one person lost her life;
- homes and even old folks' homes were flooded and damaged;
- several hundreds of people had to be evacuated to relief centres;
- thousands were stranded in traffic jams;
- many cars were totally damaged, buried by landslides, washed away in waters or were stuck in mud;
- landslides and landslips in several areas and erosion of hillslopes and
- the inability of many people to get to work.

This event and subsequent floods after that are indeed a wake-up call for serious and urgent action.

Some of the root causes of the recurrent floods in Penang can be attributed to the following:

- concrete jungle development increases surface run-off;
- hill cutting and hill-slope development;
- indiscriminate development and lack of green open spaces;
- poor drainage/clogging of drains;
- poor planning and oversight by the government; and
- increasing frequency and intensity of rainfalls due to possible changes in climate.

This is not a one-off event and is expected to recur if the authorities do not take preventive measures and deal with the root causes.

Flood mitigation alone is inadequate and comprehensive and effective action is needed.

In fact, the Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Datuk Seri Wan Junaidi said recently, that "flood mitigation projects cannot stop flooding, but can only help to reduce the impact of the floods because many other issues also contribute to the problem."

He also warned that the present rainfall data can no longer be used for flood mitigation projects because the rainfall pattern has changed in the last few years.

We therefore demand that the following actions be taken:

- i. Stop overdevelopment and the creation of more concrete jungles;
- ii. Hill-cutting and hill slope development must be stopped. This can be done by the State Government by not approving any further hill-slope and hill land developments.
- iii. The State Government should immediately amend the 2009 guidelines on 'special projects' to explicitly prohibit all development on hill lands, except if it is for essential public services;
- iv. Existing exposed and barren slopes and spaces should be rehabilitated and covered to prevent further soil erosion;
- v. Stern enforcement, effective and deterrent action be taken by relevant authorities including the local authorities on those who clear lands illegally or do not abide by conditions imposed to prevent soil-erosion;
- vi. Frequent monitoring of hill-slopes by the local authorities;
- vii. Public declaration by local authorities of hill slopes and areas which are not safe;
- viii. More tree-planting and creation of green open spaces are needed;
- ix. Regular cleaning up of drains to free from clogging;
- x. Introduce local plans now so as to control planning;
- xi. Ensure that persons in positions of power and responsibility in government are professional, honest, have integrity and experience and are held accountable for their actions; and
- xii. Beef up the enforcement and accountability not just in government agencies but also in professional bodies, like the Board of Engineers Malaysia.

The representatives of Residents Associations and Management Corporations/Committees will also reach out to their elected representatives urging them to act on the above demands and will hold them accountable for their actions.

This statement is endorsed by the following:

1. Meenakshi Raman
Tanjung Bungah Residents Association
2. Dr. Ti Lian Geh
Taman Sri Rambai /Taman Lau Geok Swee Residents' Association, Paya Terubong
3. Manuel Nicholas
Management Corporation Sunrise Garden Condominium, Sungei Ara
4. Medalene Sim
Management Committee Solok Kelicap, Sg. Ara
5. Jeffery Ho
Taman Sri Nibong Residents Association, Sungei Nibong Besar
6. Hor Cheok Weng
Management Committee, Mawar Apartment, Sungei Nibong Besar
7. Nic Sim
Management Committee, Melati Apartment, Sungei Nibong Besar
8. Ang Sue Khoo
Pykett Residents' Committee
9. Henry Loh
Management Corporation, Diamond Villa, Tanjung Bungah
10. Terence Nathan
Management Corporation, Marvista, Tg. Bungah

11. George Lee
Management Corporation, Desa Embun Emas Tg. Bungah
12. Dato' Kee Phaik Chin
Residents Association of Jesselton
13. Douglas Fox
Management Corporation of Taman Jesselton
14. S. Suppiah
Residents Association of Pantai Molek, Tg Tokong
15. K. Suthakar
Tanjung Court Condominium Residents' Ad-Hoc Group
16. Soo Ying Hong
Desa Delima Residents Association, Bandar Baru Air Itam
17. Choong Ewe Chin
Sri Impian Residents Association, Bandar Baru Air Itam
18. Steven Leong Yik Foo
Desa Baiduri Residents Adhoc Group Bandar Baru Air Itam
19. Rama Velayutham
Treasure Ville Residents Association Bandar Baru Air Itam
20. Khoo Hock Kin
Fortune Court Residents Association Bandar Baru Air Itam
21. Haji Fadzil Bin Hitam
Desaria Residents Association, Taman Desaria, Sungai Ara, Penang.
22. R. Chandra Segar
Management Corporation Vistaria Condominium Taman Desaria, Sungai Ara,
Penang.
23. Prof. Emeritus D. Gajaraj
Management Corporation of The Cove
24. Alan Tan
Management Committee Lavinia Apartment

For further information, please contact Meenakshi Raman at 012-4300042