

TBRA CALLS ON NEW CHIEF MINISTER TO MAKE PUBLIC STATE ACTION PLAN ON PAIRED ROAD PROJECTS

The Tanjung Bungah Residents Association (TBRA) calls on the newly elected Chief Minister of Penang, Chow Kon Yeow and the State Government to be fully transparent on the need for the North Coastal Paired Road (NCPR) project, the implications of this to the residents affected by the road, what alternatives were considered and deemed not feasible and how the State Action Plan addresses all the concerns of the public.

This must urgently be done prior to the commencement of any works for the NCPR.

TBRA has learnt that the State Action Plan (SAP) for the paired roads, including the NCPR, was a requirement imposed by the Department of Environment (DOE) so that the issues raised by the public would be addressed prior to the approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

TBRA urges the Chief Minister to make the SAP public so that we can assess if our concerns have been addressed effectively.

We also want to know if the SAP has addressed concerns arising from the most recent floods and landslides that occurred on Nov. 5 following heavy rains, which involved parts of the areas along the proposed NCPR road alignment in TanjungBungah.

TBRA has been raising our concerns regarding the NCPR both to the DOE and the Penang State Government previously. We had pointed out serious environmental and social impacts of the NCPR especially for thousands of residents living along the road alignment.

The EIA had revealed that about 46% of the proposed road will be on terrain with a higher than 25 degree slope, and are well known to be 'sensitive hill lands.'

How and whether the Penang State Government and the DOE have addressed this concern is a mystery to us, that requires further clarification.

Since the Penang State Government has provided an Action Plan to the DOE, it is vital for this to be made public urgently and to seek public feedback, as this will be in line with the spirit of the State Government and the new Pakatan Manifesto for being transparent and accountable to the rakyat.

TBRA also pointed out and continues to maintain that the 'saving' of 14 minutes of time travelled between Tanjung Bungah and Teluk Bahang at a cost of RM 1 billion for the NCPR will soon vanish once more traffic demand is generated by the new road in the coming years.

What has also not been made clear how the State is going to disperse the traffic from the NCPR that ends in Lembah Permai inTanjung Bungah to Straits Quay.

Hence, no construction on the NCPR should commence, until our concerns have been addressed urgently and adequately.