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Press Statement 1 September 2023

Appeal to Federal and State government not to proceed with Penang South Reclamation project

The Consumers' Association of Penang (CAP) and Sahabat Alam Malaysia (SAM) strongly appeal to both the Federal and State governments not to proceed with the Penang South Reclamation (PSR) project.

We deeply regret to learn that the State government has just revealed that the work on the project will start today, 1st September, after the Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the project was approved by the Department of Environment (DOE) in July earlier this year.

We wish to know if the State government has obtained the planning permission to commence the project under the Town and Country Planning Act 1976. This is a legal requirement which needs to be followed.

The legal issues aside, we are appalled that the Madani government is hell bent on proceeding with the project despite the concerns and objections raised by fishermen including PEN MUTIARA, the official fishermen's association and the Persatuan Nelayan Kawasan Selatan Pulau Pinang (PNKSPP) and all the units of the fishermen villages here.

The fishermen have challenged the approval of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) report but no hearing date has been fixed to date by the Appeal Board set up under the Environmental Quality Act, 1974.

The scaling down of the project from three islands to one island has not allayed our concerns and those of the fishing community. This project is simply not needed as we have argued time and again that land on the mainland is more than sufficient for any expansion of economic activities.

Destroying a vital ecosystem that is bio-diverse and which cannot be replaced is simply unjustifiable and does not make any sense.

The Madani government has professed to act in the interest of ensuring social justice, but ignoring the strenuous objections from the official fishermen's association goes in the wrong direction of good governance and a caring government.

We once again appeal to the Federal government and the Prime Minister in particular, and the State government in not exacerbating the environmental and social injustice by proceeding with the reclamation project.

Please listen to the voices of those who represent the genuine interests of the fisherfolk and not give in to the lobby of private interests who put profits over people, and halt the commencement of works immediately.

Mohideen Abdul Kader President Consumers Association of Penang

Mageswari Sangaralingam Hon. Secretary Sahabat Alam Malaysia

