



Persatuan Pengguna Pulau Pinang
Consumers Association of Penang
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Press Statement

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Building Under Construction Collapses: Authorities Need To Take Strong Action

The Penang Consumer Association (CAP) is shocked and disappointed when another building under construction collapsed. A Commission of Inquiry should be established immediately to investigate this incident.

The accident involving the collapse occurred at a logistics warehouse under construction in Batu Maung, Bayan Lepas, Penang with three confirmed dead while two were seriously injured.

CAP urged the Penang City Council (MBPP), the Malaysian Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), and the Department of Occupational Health and Safety (DOSH) to thoroughly investigate the incident and take strict action against those responsible for the accident.

Since the scene is close to the beach consisting of sand and gravel, any structure built in the area needs to be ensured that it is completely safe by taking into account all safety measures, in particular geological studies.

This matter needs to be paid attention to since it involves many parties, especially when involving the lives of workers. This accident had also caused workers to lose their lives and suffered serious injuries.

Since death statistics of occupational accidents are high, workers' safety must be a priority. According to the Department of Occupational Health and Safety (DOSH), 6,793 occupational accidents were investigated in Malaysia in 2020. Of that number, there were 193 deaths and 256 permanent disabilities recorded that year involving foreign workers.

The relevant authorities also need to strictly and continuously enforce relevant laws to ensure that all safety measures at the construction site have been complied with. Precautions should be taken seriously when working in dangerous situations.

Tough actions taken can send a message to construction companies that the law must be obeyed at all times. It corresponds to the "SAFETY FIRST" notices that are often displayed on construction sites. The owner of the premises must be held responsible for the accident that occurs.

Placing this notice does not absolve the construction industry from liability for injury and death. Likewise, this notice does not exempt DOSH from ensuring that all safety measures are followed.

In two major cases in Penang, the collapse of scaffolding on Penang's Second Bridge and the collapse of a retaining wall in a 21-storey building, the Commission of Inquiry established by the Penang State Government found incompetence and negligence.

We will wonder why an accident happened every time it occurred. Was it just an accident or did it happen due to negligence? If it happens due to negligence, then who is to blame? Developers, contractors, construction workers or the authorities themselves.

We urge the authorities to carry out a thorough and comprehensive investigation to identify the cause of the accident.

Like our repeated calls before, for the authorities to act and take action firmly against the party responsible for the accident.

Only by strictly and continuously enforcing the law will it make those responsible in the construction industry as well as the relevant authorities more compliant with the relevant laws.

The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), which is the agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related injuries and illnesses, also needs to do more to promote occupational safety and health.

Accordingly, we once again urge the authorities to immediately establish a Commission of Inquiry to investigate this incident.

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President
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