Press Release **30 October 2026**

Establish State Commission of Inquiry into Paya Terubong Landslide Tragedy

Leading Non-government Organisations (NGOs) in Penang call on the Penang state government to urgently establish a State Commission of Inquiry (SCI) into the Paya Terubong landslide tragedy near Taman Seri Rambai, that occurred on Sunday, Oct 25 which killed a 73-year-old retired doctor.

Such an SCI is needed to get to the root of how this tragedy occurred; what led to it; who and what approvals were given by authorities; what measures were taken or not taken and by whom; if negligence was involved and who is responsible; what laws and guidelines were followed or not followed and how to prevent such tragedies from happening in future.

Such an SCI was set up when the Granito tragedy happened in Tanjung Bungah which claimed the lives of 11 persons on October 21, 2017. The Granito SCI led to a set of recommendations made to the Penang authorities in respect of hillslope developments and their oversight, including legal action to be taken against those directly responsible for the negligent acts and violations.

Following the Granito tragedy lessons, we had expected that there would be no further landslide events, but sadly and regrettably, the Paya Terubong tragedy has happened. That is why we need an SCI which is transparent and open to the public to understand what went wrong and how to prevent it. Clearly, 9 years later, all is not well and this needs to be fixed.

Do the authorities ever learn their lessons or do they continue to pass the buck around as they are doing now?

We are also outraged that the draft 2040 Penang Structure Plan under review has proposals to allow developments on hills and slopes above 76 m or 25 degrees, which is a serious departure from the current 2030 Structure Plan in force. Our groups have objected to these proposals in our feedback to PlanMalaysia. Hopefully, these concerns will be taken seriously and the Paya Terubong tragedy will serve as a significant lesson not to disturb our environmentally sensitive hills and hillslopes.

It is totally irresponsible and unacceptable for the State authorities to propose loosening restrictions on hill development after the tragic loss of lives from three separate landslide incidents in Granito, Bukit Kukus and now Paya Terubong.

Clearly lessons were not learned and those responsible were not punished.

We demand that this time, those responsible for this preventable tragedy be punished to the full extent of the law.

We also demand the State cancel its proposal to permit development above 76 meters or 25 degree gradient.

The following organisations endorse this press release:

Sahabat Alam Malaysia
Consumers Association of Penang
Penang Hills Watch
Tanjung Bungah Residents Association
Jaringan Ekologi Dan Iklim
Penang Heritage Trust
Penang Forum
Women's Centre for Change
Aliran
ProtectKarpal Coalition
Agora Society
Persatuan Kejiranan Gelugor

More details in the PDF link here:
https://consumer.org.my/wp-content/uploads/2026/10/20261026_Landslide.pdf