

**Boost measures to protect public safety, urges Gerakan
MalaysiaKini.com
June 14, 2013**

Gerakan wants the Penang government to intensify enforcement and increase preventive measures to protect public safety in view of two incidents involving collapse of concrete structures over the space of a week.

Penang Gerakan state secretary Dr Lim Boon Ben said the party was concerned over the loss of lives and properties caused by the incidents - the collapse of a ramp in the yet to be completed Second Penang Bridge which happened last Friday, and the freak storm last evening.

He conveyed the party's condolences to the families who were affected by the incidents - where two died - lorry driver Jahir Hussain Sulaiman, 46, and Penang Water Board (PBA) staff member Wong Tze Chow, 33 - last night after being struck by a falling lightning conductor (from the state Umno building along Jalan Macalister) and a fallen tree respectively in Air Itam.

At least five people were injured and are currently receiving treatment at the Penang General Hospital, while at least 200 rooftops have been blown away by the strong winds.

Another person, former policeman Tajuddin Zainal Abidin, 45, died last Friday when his car was smashed by the Second Penang Bridge's 400 tonne concrete ramp which collapsed along Jalan Batu Maung.

"Owners and developers of high-rise buildings under construction should ensure adequate measures are in place, such as putting up safety nets, appropriate fencing and stronger scaffoldings," said Lim.

"There are laws including municipal by-laws to protect public safety against falling structures, trees, branches, and other structures," he added.

"Of course we cannot stop or control natural disaster but we should take measures to reduce the impact and minimise loss of life and damage," he stressed in a statement today.

Lim said building owners should ensure their structures are strong and fit for occupation not only for now but also for longer periods.

He urged the state government to ensure that future development plans include environment-friendly elements before they are approved.

'Be more matured in comments'

He urged politicians and social media users to be more matured in their comments or statements over the incidents.

"What they said could lead to unfair perception and confusion amongst the people," he said.

"We should not politicise or put the blame on others when an accident happens," he added.

"It is more important to do rescue operation and address the issue at hand promptly," he stressed.

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Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/232936>