

Kit Siang uses 007 to target PM
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In Ian Fleming's seventh James Bond novel, villain Auric Goldfinger told 007 that he knew the secret agent was up to no good after their third meeting.

"Once is happenstance, twice is coincidence, three times is enemy action," Goldfinger told Bond.

But for Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang, three times is "systemic government collapse" in reference to what he described as a series of "government mishaps under the Abdullah Ahmad Badawi premiership".

Lim was commenting on Abdullah's angry reaction to the collapse of roof paneling in the spanking new Jalan Duta court complex yesterday - the third major structural problem in as many weeks involving government-owned buildings.

A visibly irate prime minister has ordered immediate checks on all government buildings following the successive reports of burst pipes and collapsed ceilings.

"Maintenance is very important. I have said this many times but these people, as long as nothing happens, they don't care," Abdullah was quoted as saying by the New Straits Times.

He was clearly angry that new and expensive government buildings were already showing signs of decay.

Structural defects in government buildings	
April 11	Pipe burst in new Immigration Department headquarters in Putrajaya causing water leakage and disruption in electric supply.
April 28	Part of the ceiling of a multi-purpose hall at the Entrepreneurial Development and Co-operative Ministry collapsed, causing a water pipe to burst in the process.
April 30	Two pieces of ceiling panel collapse at the new Jalan Duta court complex.

Azlan Zamhari / Malaysiakini

On Saturday, a ceiling had caved in due to a leaky sprinkler system at the Entrepreneur and Co-operative Development Ministry in Putrajaya, south of the capital.

Two days later, parts of a ceiling collapsed at the brand new court complex in Kuala Lumpur after it failed to withstand the weight of heavy light fixtures.

In another incident, the Immigration Department was forced to suspend services to thousands of people and relocate foreign detainees after a burst water pipe inundated its building in Putrajaya last month.

Built at an estimated RM22 billion, construction of Putrajaya began in 1996, under the administration of former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"I feel ashamed. These are new buildings and there are problems. There must be something wrong," Abdullah said, while ordering for a thorough inspection of all government buildings to look for possible defects.

"We don't know if this is because the contractor did not do the work properly ... or the buildings were poorly designed," he said.

Describing the incidents as "disgraceful", Lim said the building defects goes beyond a 'third-world maintenance culture' as blamed by Abdullah.

"When even new buildings costing more than first-world counterparts break down even before being fully operational, like what happened at the largest court complex in the world in Jalan Duta, the problem must be fundamental and deep-seated.

"What we are seeing is the decay and disintegration of a public service delivery system which had rightly prided itself of being world-class in the first decade of independence," he said.

Samy: Complex designed by PWD

According to Works Minister S Samy Vellu yesterday, the Public Works Department designed the court complex while the building was built by contractor Johawaki Development Sdn Bhd.

He said the contractor had failed to properly attach the lighting system to concrete structures, causing the two pieces of ceiling panels to collapse.

On the ceiling collapse at the Entrepreneurial Development and Co-operative Ministry's multi-purpose hall, Samy said the maintenance of the building was performed by Jutabina Sempurna Sdn Bhd.

"We are waiting for the report from Putrajaya Holdings Sdn Bhd (who built the hall). We also want to know what they are going to do about it.

"The PWD has no connection with this and I don't want to comment on it... We will not comment on anything not connected to us as it is better to mind our own business," said Samy according to New Straits Times.

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