

Defective gov't buildings: Time to bite the bullet
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I refer to the malaysiakini report Tan: Make public results of RM22m inspection.

The prime minister and Works Minister S Samy Vellu have again called for a committee to look into the falling ceilings and burst pipes in new government buildings. Do we not know the basic cause? Do we want to waste our time in forming another committee which will then recommend another committee to be formed?

It's about time we bite the bullet before someone gets killed by falling ceilings and drowned by flooded government departments.

It is our system of how government jobs are awarded. Company A which knows nuts about construction is awarded the job who will then sub-contract the jobs to over many, many layers of sub-contractors. The first few layers of companies get free money for doing nothing, apart from being well-connected.

Is there such a thing as a free lunch? How do you expect the real contractor, who is normally a non-bumiputera, to do a decent job when so much free money has been debited from the real project cost?

You may ask, 'Why does he want to take on the job when he obviously cannot meet the budget?' Very simple. There is no other job for him to do if he does not take it. So he will try to use all means (that we are all too familiar with) to meet the budget.

If variation orders are not approved, then cutting corners is the next thing. If that is not possible, then bribing the supervisors is the next...

If we really want a good government building, we need to do what you and I know. Otherwise expect more horrors to come.

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