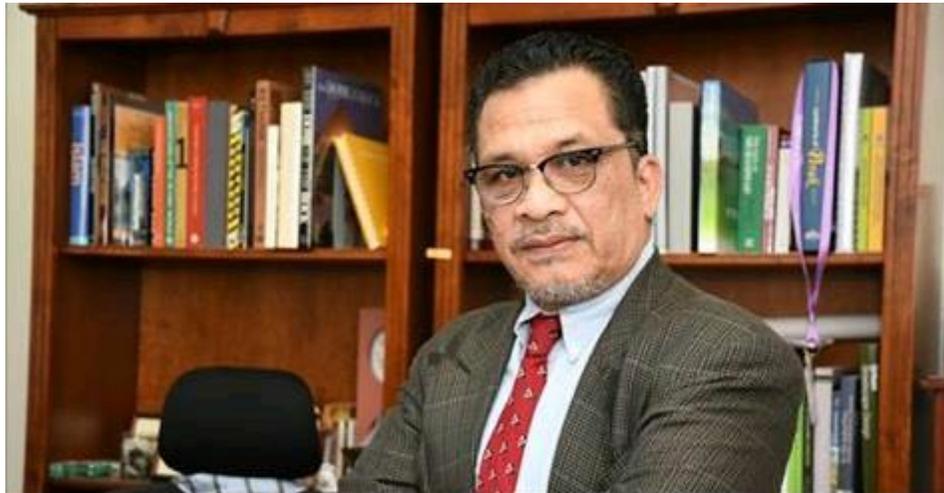


## MIP: REVIEW CONSTRUCTION PROCESS TO AVOID TRAGEDIES

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PETALING JAYA (Oct 26): The construction industry system and processes should be reviewed on the basis of responsibility and accountability of various parties, instead of the expediting of approvals, said the Malaysian Institute of Planners (MIP).

“MIP strongly thinks that the existing policies and guidelines for developments on hill slopes/hill sites need to be reviewed immediately, to address the crucial issues of Disaster Risk Reduction. We need to move forward and find ways to reduce the possibility of recurrence of this tragedy,” said its president Ihsan Zainal Mokhtar.

He noted that Tanjung Bungah is a reflection of the existing challenges and needs between economic and environmental sustainability.

“This site tragedy has to be seen from various aspects. We will focus on two important ones — the approval process, planning permission (Kebenaran Merancang) as stated in Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172), and the construction process on site.

Ihsan added that the process on site has been fully explained by Institution of Engineers Malaysia (IEM).

MIP concurs with IEM that implementing all safety and engineering requirements are necessary, said Ihsan.

Moreover, the institute also urged all parties to support the strengthening of the process of planning permission as it is the key approval needed for all developments and should thus be reinforced by the contributions of all experts and professionals.

“Calls for the process to be expedited should not be at the expense of safety, the environment, the impact on liveability and the general interest of the public at large. This tragedy has reminded us of the need to review existing approval processes and be more stringent and complete in our guidelines and legislations,” said Ihsan.

Besides this, MIP also hoped that the decision-making process will include public objections, views and all planning decisions be made transparent and accountable.

“The possibility of uploading decisions of the local authority for public scrutiny should be seriously considered,” he said.

Ihsan noted that MIP is willing to work closely with all quarters and all levels of government, professionals, consultants as well as stakeholders in assisting and providing professional expertise and input in achieving a safe, healthy, comfortable and sustainable environment.

Eleven workers perished when a landslide happened at the Granito @ Permai 50-storey affordable housing construction site at Tanjung Bungah on Oct 11.

The Penang state government and local authorities had said it was a construction site incident, noting that the site was not on a hillslope.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng had formally announced a commission of inquiry into the incident.