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No pollution from Samalaju chemical plant blast in 2022, ministers tells state assembly

By Bruno J

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KUCHING 21 OKTOBER 2021 Bagunan Dewan Undangan Negeri (DUN) Sarawak. STR/NADIM BOKHARI

KUCHING: There were no air nor water pollution in the aftermath of a chemical plant explosion at the Samalaju Industrial Park near Bintulu two years ago.

Sarawak's Deputy Minister for International Trade, Industry and Investment, Malcolm Mussen Lamoh, told the legislative assembly the incident on May 9, 2022, which killed two workers and injured two others, did not cause environmental issues.

He said all the air pollution control systems at the plant functioned well during the incident and tests conducted by environmental authorities detected no pollution in areas surrounding the plant.

Mussen said a third party technical investigation team had been appointed to undertake a forensic investigation of the incident and that the company has presented the findings and outcomes to the Sarawak government.

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He said the company will undertake necessary mitigation measures contained in the report.

He said this when replying to a question from a government backbencher Johnny Pang Leong Ming (GPS-Tanjong Batu) during question time.

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Mussen also told the state assembly that the Sarawak government has ordered a tighter enforcement of the air pollution control systems "to ensure the industry adheres to legislation by implementing various mitigation measures to reduce the impact of pollution."

Apart from that, he said the industry must appoint a competent person to handle air pollution control equipment, effluent treatment system and scheduled waste; the industry to install continuous emission monitoring of air pollution emission at chimneys to enable reporting to Department of Environment through the i-remote online system.

He added the industry must also take immediate or appropriate mitigation measures if the pollution emissions exceed the prescribed limits; review and improve safe operating procedures for works involving hydrogen gas; and review the post-risk assessment.

Kevwords:

Pollution, Sarawak Legislative Assembly, Samalaju Industrial Park, Malcolm Mussen Lamoh

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