

On Kaohsiung Gas Explosion: Pictures by Prof. Dr. John Li – Past President of SEAGS

Biodata of Dr.Li:

Dr. John Chien Chung Li graduated from the National ChengKung University of Taiwan in 1971 and then joined the army for his military service as a second lieutenant in the Corps of Engineers. He started his graduated study in Michigan State University in 1973 and received the Master degree in 1975. Then he went on with his doctoral studies at MSU under Prof. Ted S. Vinson and Prof. O. B. Andersland, where he graduated with the PhD degree in 1979.

Dr. Li began his teaching career at the beginning of 1979 as an assistant professor in the Dept. of Civil Engineering of Wayne State University in Detroit. In summer of 1980, Dr. Li decided to accept an invitation from the National Central University and return to Taiwan, where he started the researches on the dynamic behavior of Taipei silt and the dynamic testing on the piled foundations. Dr. Li was promoted to become Professor in 1984 and thereafter, the Chairman of the Department. Dr. Li was granted leave from the university in 1985 and joined the largest construction company in Taiwan to lead the departments of research and corporate planning for three years.

He then returned to the University in 1988 and served as the Chairman of the Civil Engineering for another three years.

In 1991, Dr. Li was directed by the government to join the newly established Public Construction Commission and became the Vice Chairman of the Commission to oversee all the public works construction in Taiwan for nine years. During this period, Dr. Li was the leading person to draft the new Government Procurement Law and the Law to Encourage Private Participation in Public Construction.

After the year 2000 Taiwan election, Dr. Li return to University again and established the Graduate Institute of Construction Engineering and Management and later, became The Dean of the College of Engineering in 2003.

Professionally, Dr. Li has served as the President of the Chinese Institute of Civil and Hydraulic Engineering in Taipei and the President of the Sino Geotechnics Foundation. Dr. Li was President of the Southeast Asian Geotechnical Society in 1999- 2001.

On Khaosiung Gas Explosion: By Prof. Dr. John Li

On the Friday 1st of August, the municipal city of southern Taiwan, Kaohsiung City has struck the nation's heart by a totally unexpected blast exploded caused by the unusual Propylene gas leakage from underground pipe systems. The gas blast happened on the midnight of 11.59pm 31st July, and so far has caused a deadly toll of 28 people and still an ascending number of injuries and deaths.

The blast took place in Cianjhen and Lingya districts of Kaohsiung, according to Environmental Protection Bureau head, Chen Chin-der, the gas pressure had a sudden drop from 42 kilograms per square centimeter (kg/cm²) to 13 kg/cm² on Thursday night in between 8.50pm to 9.45pm Thursday night. It is suspected that 10 tons of leaking gas behind this explosions, and both main gas providers of warehousing and transportation services of petrochemical raw materials, *LCY Chemical Corp.* and *China General Terminal & Distribution Corporation (CGTD)* respectively are to be blamed behind the explosion.

The explosion has blasted to such extent that the entire sections of roads and streets were ruptured and ripped into pieces, vehicles were turned upside down and some pieces of roads and vehicles even flung to the rooftops of buildings. The affected areas are stretching around 4 kilometers; roughly 1500 troops were dispatched to aid the affected site, to assist in relief effort and moreover, hoping to find bodies that were and still under the debris. An intense rescue operation is still undergoing, many lives are still urgently expecting to be sought and affecting tens and thousands.

The municipal government says pavement, sidewalks, street lighting, storm drains and other facilities were seriously damaged in an area covering more than 72,300 square meters and stretching more than 4 kilometers along roads in the vicinity. City officials stress that the basic infrastructure needs to be restored as soon as possible to allow access to businesses and residences in the area. When that has been done private owners can begin rebuilding and get back to normal life.

The Kaohsiung city Government has set its initial estimates for the cost to repair roads, culverts and the infrastructure damaged by this cruel and immense explosion. It is estimated roughly US\$60million is to repair the damage, but it is surely cannot be estimated how to cure the deaths and injuries among the families that have lost their love ones. 1st of August, is surely will be the day to be grieved by the nation.



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