Senior PKR officials barred from entering coal mine tragedy site

KUCHING: Senior PKR officials, including Penang’s Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Dr Mansor Othman, failed to get entry to the site within the coal mine in Abok near Sri Aman where three China nationals died recently.

Penang’s number two Dr Mansor who used to head Universiti Sains Malaysia’s Centre for Policy Research, was accompanied by PKR’s Sri Aman hopeful Nicholas Mujah during a visit to the coal mine.

In a media statement, both claimed that they were stopped at the front gate leading into the coal mine.

The statement also said Dr Mansor’s entourage, which also included state’s PKR leaders Abang Ziklifli and Baharuddin Mokhsen as well as activist Numpang Suntai, were keen to witness the site at the mine where an explosion occurred last Friday.

“Dr Mansor expresses PKR’s sympathy to the families of the deceased miners and those injured. He is calling for the state government and authorities to carry out thorough investigations to ensure that safety procedures and regulations are adhered strictly at the coal mine,” the statement said.

“We also believe that reasonable compensation must be paid to the families of the deceased and those injured.”

The statement claimed that about 200 China nationals were working in the mine, each earning minimal wage of RM2,500 per month.

“However, locals are being offered salaries of RM400 per month and only one has been accepted (so far), who is being employed as a security guard,” the statement said.