

Thinking of home, family till the end

Blast victim with 80% burns on his body, dies

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GEORGE TOWN: Even while fighting for his life in hospital, store-keeper Lee Kok Eang was still worried for his family home which was destroyed in an explosion.

The 62-year-old (pic), who succumbed to his injuries since, was concerned that his 20th floor unit at Green Garden Apartment in Jalan Paya Terubong would not be liveable after the blast on Sunday.

"He kept asking about the unit although he was in pain at the intensive care unit of Penang Hospital.

"He was worried about the repair cost, and that my mother and brother's family had no place to stay," said Kok Eang's son Chye Wai, when met at the funeral wake in Paya Terubong.

At 2.30am yesterday, Kok Eang was pronounced dead at Penang Hospital after sustaining 80% burns to his head, arms, body and feet.

On Sunday, a gas leak caused a blast that brought down the walls in two bedrooms, the living room and a wall separating the neighbouring unit.

Several units nearby also had shattered windows and cracks were

found on the concrete walls.

George Town OCPD Asst Comm Che Zaimani Che Awang said the explosion was triggered by a liquefied petroleum gas leak ignited by a spark in the unit.

He said investigation showed that the victim wanted to light a cigarette.

Besides Kok Eang, three other family members, including his daughter-in-law who is seven months pregnant, were also in the house.

They escaped unhurt during the incident.

Chye Wai said his father's death did not come as a surprise as the doctors had told them to expect the worst.

"My father suffered 80% burns on his body and did not show signs of recovery while warded at ICU.

"The doctors told us that his chances of recovery was slim and we were prepared for it," he said.

Chye Wai said his family members were staying at a relative's home.

Kok Eang's funeral will be held at 2pm on Saturday.

He will be cremated at the Batu Gantong Crematorium.



Devastation: The Bomba Forensics team visiting the site of the blast to collect samples. (Left) Walls from the Green Garden apartment unit after the blast that killed a 62-year-old man.