

[The Star Online](#) > Nation

Thursday November 18, 2004

## Explosions heard as fire guts godown

**BUTTERWORTH:** More than RM1mil worth of industrial chemicals went up in smoke in a godown fire at Taman Nagasari in the Prai Industrial Estate here.

At the height of the blaze, which started at about 10am yesterday, several explosions could be heard. Thick black smoke billowing from the site could be seen from as far as Penang.



Firemen battling the blaze in the godown at Taman Nagasari in Butterworth.

More than 100 firemen including voluntary firefighters in the area fought for hours to put out the fire at the godown belonging to Zue Huat Chemical Sdn Bhd.

Police also cordoned off the area about 1km away from the scene for fear the explosions would pose a danger to passing motorists.

Some 300 workers from four nearby factories were also evacuated.

Traffic along the North South Highway and the Penang-Kuala Lumpur trunk road came to a snail's pace as motorists slowed down to watch.

Central and South Seberang Prai fire officer Asst Supt Ishak Hashim said fire engines from Prai, Bukit Mertajam, Butterworth and Jalan Perak were deployed to the scene.

The explosions came from the drums storing propane, methanol and ethanol chemicals, he said, adding that the fire was only put out at about 2.15pm.

“Our initial investigations revealed that a forklift had crashed into a chemical drum sparking off a fire,” he said.

About 20 people who were in the godown escaped unhurt, ASP Ishak Hashim added.

Ann Mary, 42, a security guard of a factory opposite the godown said the window panes of her guard post were shattered as a result of the explosions.

She said more than 60 workers from her factory were evacuated.

The godown management could not be reached for comment.

© 1995-2004 Star Publications (Malaysia) Bhd (Co No 10894-D)