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118 statements recorded in pipeline fire investigation

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KUALA LUMPUR: Selangor police have recorded statements from 118 individuals to assist in the investigation into the gas pipeline fire in Puteri Heights, Selangor police chief Datuk Hussein Omar Khan confirmed yesterday.

He said 15 of them were contractors, sub-contractors and workers involved in excavation and sewer pipe installation at the explosion site.

"An inquiry paper has been opened to determine whether there are any criminal elements related to the incident," he told

reporters at a press conference held at the Incident Control Post in Puteri Heights.

Hussein said police had excavated the sewage pipe built by a contractor and found that it was laid 2.1m below the road surface.

"Further inspection revealed that the contractor's excavation work did not exceed three metres in depth, with a trench width of 1.5m.

"The excavation and installation work spanned more than 30m and is believed to be planned for further extension," he added.

The road, which intersects with the Petronas

gas pipeline, had been approved for excavation by the contractor.

For the purpose of the investigation, police are using three excavators, a bulldozer and a backhoe to carry out the digging works, which are still ongoing, to examine the pipeline believed to be buried at a depth of between six and seven metres.

He said the excavation efforts are being closely monitored by police, Petronas, the Public Works Department, Survey and Mapping Department, Department of Occupational Safety and Health, Tenaga Nasional Berhad, Air

Selangor and the contractor.

"Police found that the gas pipeline is located at a depth of 5.6m beneath the road surface, meaning the distance between the sewage pipe and the gas pipeline is 1.6m.

"The physical condition of the gas pipe does not show any noticeable disturbance.

"At this point, whether the excavation work carried out by the contractor had affected the pipeline cannot be determined until the entire length of the gas pipe in the area is fully exposed and further investigation is completed," he said. - Bernama