

## **Giant 'Ubah' to make a splash in Penang**

**MalaysiaKini.com**

**July 11, 2013**

**By Susan Loone**

Penang is famed for its many tourist attractions, but the latest item - a giant inflatable shaped as 'Ubah', DAP's mascot - may raise more eyebrows than awe.

The plan was to follow the footsteps of Hong Kong's decision to play host to a 16.5m tall (6 stories high) giant inflatable yellow duck by Dutch artist Florentijn Hofman.

This idea was enthusiastically embraced by Hong Kong's citizens, many of whom told international news organisations the brightly coloured inflatable duck brought them lots of joy.

Come Saturday, Penang would witness the launch of a 7m tall inflatable hornbill dubbed the 'Water Ubah' that is set to be bobbing around the Sungai Pinang Promenade.

The inflatable will be on display until Aug 31 to mark Malaya's Independence Day.

NONEPenang Chief Minister and DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said that the 'Water Ubah' was conceived by DAP supporters who were hoping to emulate Hofman's success.

"We thought of doing something familiar like the duck in Hong Kong where the state government would be able to pay for it, but we had copyright problems as we then have to ask permission to do it and the cost would be much more. Our supporters suggested that we use the hornbill," Lim said when contacted.

The 'Ubah', designed by DAP's Ooi Leng Hang, first appeared during the Sarawak state election in 2011 and immediately became a hit among DAP supporters.

Soon, 'Ubah' appeared on posters and party videos, but it is most famous as a hot-selling soft toy. 'Ubah' was also the party's mascot during the 13th general election.

Made of PVC

The latest incarnation of 'Ubah' is a RM60,000 behemoth made of PVC.

NONE"I told them that the state couldn't pay for it. So our supporters decided to contribute money," said Lim.

"We hope this little contribution will be well-received by both tourists and locals."

Lim said that the hornbill not only represented Sarawak as certain species were indigenous to Peninsular Malaysia as well.

Asked about possible backlash from environmentalists about the large amount of plastic used for the project, Lim replied: "It is not harmful to anyone."

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