

**Penang's vision 2020: CM must 'walk the talk'**  
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The Penang Heritage Trust is asking Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng to 'walk the talk', commenting on Lim's recent business trip to Singapore where he spoke of heritage, good governance and the environment.

penang world heritage town 140708 01The Trust's council member Rebecca Duckett said Lim must be willing to protect what he is promoting and really show some "long term political will" towards the various issues he had raised.

"Although the recent 'Cleaner, Greener Penang' campaign has resulted in some return visitors - and many Penangites who live elsewhere and returning on holiday - commenting on how much cleaner the streets are, the CM must make sure that this campaign is not just skin deep," said Duckett.

"The CM has to think about how to get these people back; sustainability of heritage conservation and environmental friendliness require a lot more work than just getting the streets swept," she added.

NONEGeorge Town is celebrating its two year anniversary as an approved Unesco World Heritage site, with July 7 being a state holiday recently announced by Lim.

But lately, heritage and environmental activists have not been too pleased with the state for allowing risky hill slope development (above) and construction of concrete structures that mar the islands landscapes.

Last week, Lim spoke at the World Cities Summit's ministerial dialogue on "Leading the change: building liveable and vibrant cities" in Singapore.

Traffic choking Penang

His speech included the seven elements of change towards retaining Penang's premier position as the most livable and vibrant city in Malaysia.

NONEThe elements included security and stability such as low crime rates and civil unrest, good governance and effective leadership, economic vibrancy and competitiveness, quality of life and diversity, environmental friendliness and sustainability, heritage conservation, and an intelligent city encompassing human, collective, digital, institutional and integrity aspects.

Duckett responded to Lim's (left) speech by listed out several hindrances to making Penang a "vibrant and liveable" city, saying these were not easy tasks and can only be managed when the CM shows genuine interest in improving the city for the people.

One of the most urgent threats, said Duckett, is urban swiftlet (below) farming, which she says will destroy Penang and George Town if not tackled immediately.

NONE"The CM must ask himself, and the government of Singapore, why urban swiftlet farming is not allowed there," she quipped.

She proposed that the moratorium on swiftlet farming be lifted and given a deadline. Farms

should be moved out immediately to rural areas where they will also provide an economy to benefit the rural poor there.

She also lamented the traffic woes around the city's heritage zone. For George Town to be truly 'liveable and vibrant', she said it must be cleared of cars and coaches and proper parking areas be provided.

Enforcement the key

"He (Lim) must start to support all the individuals who have invested, moved here, started businesses, and (are promoting) Penang and George Town, all to his benefit," she said.

penang pulau pinang old heritage pre war buildings 160307 01 "What these people have done as individuals is used all the time to promote Penang; it is these people who have been lured here by the potential George Town offers and by the potential of his leadership," she added.

Duckett said Lim's administration must deliver so that the people who have invested in the state are not frustrated or disappointed.

"Laws and policies are not the worth the paper they are written on if the CM and his government do not act on their words," she said.

"Enforcement leads to change, and I would urge the CM to definitely stand strong," she added.

In his Singapore speech, Lim had also said Penang is focusing on its human resources to transform it into an international city, with a high-income knowledge economy and targetting a GDP of USD20 billion and per capita income of USD15,000 by 2020. He boasted that ECA International had recently selected Penang as the 8th most livable city in Asia, on par with Kuala Lumpur.

"Penang has been voted consistently as having the second best street food in the world, one of 30 global business process outsourcing centres for the future, and a Unesco World Heritage City for our outstanding universal values of cultural diversity and living heritage," added Lim.

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