

Stick With Manifesto And Keep Penang Green

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As a Penangite, I read with sadness news reports from The Star, 31 January 2012 where at least 20 beautiful and shady Angsana trees had their main trunks "girdled", effectively killing these trees as the main trunk is left unable to regrow from its wound.

Can the state Health, Welfare, Caring Society and Environment Committee chairman Phee Boon Poh care to enlighten Penangites if the Penang Municipal Council has conducted any investigations or taken action against these tree-destroyers considering that he had initially confessed that he knew nothing about the matter.

The Star (31 Jan 2012) had also reported that the local authorities had carried out "a 'hack job' of pruning Penang Island's trees."

The majestic Angsana trees take more than 30 years to reach their height and size. Not only are they an aesthetic sight to behold, they provide shade and a cooling effect to pedestrians and motorists given our Malaysian tropical climate where heat and humidity are the norm. These Angsana and other trees effectively improve the quality of life for the Penang populace.

The DAP election manifesto of 2008 campaigned on "A Healthy Environment for the Future Generation" where among others, the Rocket pledged to "Preserve our bio-diversity" and "Provide and protect green lungs for densely populated urban areas."

But actions and ignorance of the local councils prove otherwise. They seem more bent on environment carnage than preservation.

Pakatan Manifestos a ploy

This proves that Pakatan Rakyat is only playing a political game when introducing the Common Policy Framework in 2009.

DAP candidates in 2008 and their manifesto had promised many things, such as the removal of carpark charges during the weekend and the abolition of the Sg Nyir toll, neither of which have been fulfilled. Instead, in the case of carpark charges, Pakatan Rakyat has allowed car park charges to be extended until night time.

The much brandished Buku Jingga completely obliterates mention of environmental protection – perhaps this explains why the Angsana trees in Penang are being "killed off."

Other failures of the DAP-led state govt

The incompetency of the Penang government under Pakatan Rakyat stretches from small issues such as looking after 20 Angsana trees to bigger ones such as failure to maintain the Bukit Bendera tram which has broken down time and time again and the newly built but unusable 'Kancil' car park, costing the state millions of Ringgit. If looking after 20 trees can prove to be too much for them to handle, what more the welfare of the Penangites? How do they expect us to trust them with our future when they have proven themselves incompetent countless of times?

Thus, I urge the DAP-led state government to keep to their promise of looking after the environment for the benefit of all Penangites and that domestic and foreign tourists visiting the Pearl of the Orient will be awed by the beauty and splendor of Penang trees which contribute to a better quality of life to urbanites.

As a heritage Angsana tree was also found "girdled" outside a luxury condominium project in Jalan Kelawei and not be by developers, the state government must also ensure development projects must not go overboard till they destroy the environment thereby jeopardising the comfort of much-sought after urban-living surrounded by lush greenery which Penang is known for.

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