

**DAP's Approval For Hillside Dev Projects In Penang**  
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**By Tan Cheng Liang**

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng boasts that since 2008, the Penang Island Municipal Council (MPPP) had issued 259 stop-work orders, while the Seberang Perai Municipal Council issued 11 stop work order for the same period, thereby proving that the Pakatan-led is stricter with developers than Barisan Nasional.

However, the DAP Secretary General conveniently avoids informing that there have been more protests by Penangites against hillside development in the Pearl of the Orient since 2008, the latest being by chorus of dissatisfaction by residents of Mount Pleasure, Batu Feringghi who objected against approval accorded by MPPP early this year for the construction of 21 four-storey villas and 80 two-storey bungalows there.

The promises and claims

The DAP General Elections Manifesto proudly unveiled by Guan Eng back in 2008 promised to "Preserve our forest, wetlands and bio-diversity" under the column of "A Healthy Environment for the Future Generation."

This was followed up with Clause 9 of Pakatan's Common Policy Framework also stresses that the "environment must be preserved for the sustainability of future generations."

Just six weeks ago, Guan Eng claimed in a speech that the Pakatan government was proud of its record of not approving any hillside development.

Deception And Broken Promises by DAP to electorates once again

However, the voices of disapproval by Penangites are evidence that Guan Eng's pronouncement and DAP' and Pakatan' commitment are deceptive, as the contradictory examples below will reveal.

8 April 2012 – Sungai Ara residents protested against approval issued by MPPP Planning Department on 21 February 2012 for two hillside development projects. One project covers 14 blocks of condominiums, 92 bungalows and two clubhouses which reportedly would take up 24.82ha of the 32.7ha area or about 75% of the hill. The other involves building a 22-storey condominium.

February 2009 – Tanjung Bunga residents protested against and submitted a memorandum calling upon the State Government to ban all current and future Class III & Class IV hill slope development projects.

Thus, in view of the uproar by Mount Pleasure folks yesterday, as well as earlier protests staged by Tanjung Bungan and Sungai Ara residents against hillside development, and to deliver on DAP's pledge and Pakatan's Common Policy Framework on environment preservation, I challenge Guan Eng and his administration to issue a stop-order against all hillside development projects approved by MPPP.

It should also be pointed out that Pakatan's Buku Jingga strangely does not mention anything about keeping the environment green. Is this glaring omission a carte blanche for state governments like Penang to flatten hills?

Focus on luxury residences, but not a scant of regard for the poor

I am also puzzled as to why the Penang state government is not a caring government for the needy who need aid the most. Approvals are given for exclusive housing and condominium projects on hills, but scant attention is given for low cost housing for Penang's poor where no low or medium cost units were

constructed between 2008 to 2011.

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