

**Proper Planning Vital To Ensure High Quality Life - Singapore PM
Bernama
July 02, 2012
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SINGAPORE, July 2 (Bernama) -- As the world is about urbanisation on an unprecedented scale, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong said proper planning was needed to ensure a high quality of life for city dwellers to live, work and play.

He said currently, cities housed more than 50 per cent of the world's population and accounted for more than 70 per cent of global output, while more than 2.5 billion people would move to cities by 2050.

"Driven by emerging economies, particularly Asia - China (with) 320 million people (more than the entire USA today) will move to cities by 2050, bringing total urban population to one billion (while) India - almost half a billion (488 million) people will move to cities over the same period.

"Cities can be better habitats for the world's population, more economically dynamic, culturally diverse, potentially environmentally-friendly...but needs proper planning, efficient administration, public support to make cities work (including for policies to protect environment, for example, taxes on goods with negative externalities on environment), Otherwise, will strain resources and degrade environment, he said.

Lee said this when addressing the official opening of three events -- Singapore International Water Week, World Cities Summit and CleanEnviro Summit at Marina Bay Sands Convention and Exhibition Centre Sunday evening.

The prime minister said the events with a common theme, 'How to develop liveable and sustainable cities, and build beautiful and endearing homes' were timely, appropriate and valuable platforms for learning.

The Singapore International Water Week will discuss 'Water Solutions for Sustainable and Liveable Cities' and the World Cities Summit will examine integrated urban solutions for liveable and sustainable cities.

Lee said inaugural CleanEnviro Summit would explore solutions to address environmental and waste challenges faced by Asia's growing cities.

He said the next phase was to build a 'city in a garden' to bring green spaces and biodiversity to the people's doorstep.

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Source: <http://www.bernama.com/bernama/v6/newsindex.php?id=677313>