



(<http://dapmalaysia.org/en>)

DAPMalaysia.org (<http://dapmalaysia.org/en>)



Disagreement with the proposed Forest City project

In response to the Public Dialog organised by the developer of “Forest City” project, Country Garden Pacificview Sdn Bhd (CGP) on 21st September 2014, I would like to register my stance on the project and specific concerns as follows.

1. I disagreed with the proposed Forest City project because this humongous 5,000 property development on land reclaimed from Johor Straits will bring more damages than benefits to the local community, the environment and the state and national economy. These damages are serious, far reaching and irreversible.
2. Reclamation work for Forest City started around January to February early this year without any public information, let alone public consultation. During late January 2014, it was reported that thousands of fish found dead along the Johor Straits near Gelang Patah and local fishermen believed this was caused by abrupt changes in water quality as large scale reclamation commenced in the water off Kampung Pok, which was later revealed as the Forest City project.
3. In March 2014, Deputy Environment Minister James Dawos Mamit told the Parliament that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) was not required for this reclamation project because the proposed reclaimed area is below 50 hectare, as stipulated under the federal environmental laws, and later on during the Johore State Assembly on Jun 2014 the Menteri Besar Khalid Nordin repeated the same statement. Their explanation did not hold water. The fact is, before March 2014, several individual land titles including one named PTD 4071 with the size about 1,700 hectare located on the seabed on Johor Straits to the south of Kampung Pok has been alienated to CPG. This information was obtained by conducting official land search from the Johor Lands and Mines Office.
4. In other words, it will be inconceivable if the authorities including the Department of Environment (DOE) were then not aware of the ongoing coastal reclamation was the start of a massive 5,000 acre project in an area with very important marine biodiversity. This also an important fishing ground for



(</en/take-action/join-us/>)



(/mailing_list/en.php)



(</en/events/>)



(<https://youtube.com/watch?v=...>)



(<http://therocket.com.my>)



(<http://top.rmk.com>)



(<http://www.ubah.com.my>)



(<http://impiannalaysia.com>)



(<http://dapmalaysia.org/en/index.html#/donate>)

Tony Pua ...

How Man...

- at least 200 fishermen, and the Port of Tanjung Pelepas (PTP) with very heavy traffic is located only 3km away.
5. Despite numerous protests by the local fishermen and calls from political leaders including the Gelang Patah MP Lim Kit Siang and also myself, the reclamation continued for several months. It was only after the Singaporean government raised their concerns a number of times that a stop work order was issued in June 2014
 6. Despite the Stop Work order, there were reliable reports from the ground that the contractors did not cease their work. It must be noted that, by June 2014, the reclaimed island has probably exceeded 50 hectares and it was directly connected to Kampung Pok by a causeway. All these were done without public information and consultation. There was not even a project signboard bearing the essential details of the project erected anywhere within the construction site.
 7. Reclamation was carried out blatantly under the sun without necessary approval but its details were shrouded in secrecy.
 8. My objection to the Forest City project is also due to its non-compliance with the local plans. Most important of all is the Iskandar Malaysia Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP) which was a statutory planning document approved by the government and enforced by Iskandar Regional Development Authority. The proposed Forest City project is located entirely within the boundaries of Iskandar Development Region hence its compliance to the CDP is mandatory. However, a check with the CDP shows no plan at all to convert the marine waters south of Kampung Pok to reclaimed island for any kind of purposes
 9. My objection to the Forest City project MUST NOT be interpreted as a consequent of anti-development ideology inclination. As elected representative to the Johor State Assembly, I hope Johor will continue to develop economically and all Johorean will reap its benefits. I also understand that as population grows in Johore, at a pace faster than many other states in Malaysia, it is inevitable that new lands are needed to build houses and commercial centres. But this does not such large scale reclamation because there are still vast land available for development in Johor. According to the Second National Physical Plan (2010-2015), a statutory document prepared under the Town and Country Planning Act, in terms of total land availability for future development by states, Johor has the largest area at 314,750 hectare (refer pg 4-21, National Physical Plan 2, 2010). After subtracting all built up areas and environmentally sensitive area not suitable for land development, Johor still has vast land with development potential. I want to question the government's intention to abandon those 300,000 hectare identified with development potential and instead allowing the unplanned and environmentally destructive 1,700 hectare reclamation in the Johor Straits.
 10. As the State Assemblyman for Pengkalan Rinting which is

located only 15km to the east of Forest City, I objected this project also because among my constituency there are fishing communities who are still fishing in the waters at the reclamation sites for their livelihood. Reclaiming 5,000 acres out of the already narrow and congested Johore Straits will hurt the livelihood of these fishermen deeply. There is nowhere else they can go to fish.

11. The impacts on environment and to the fishermen aside, I want to raise the larger economic concerns of this mega project. According to the report by business weekly The Edge (September 13), the Gross Development Value (GDV) of Forest City is RM600 billion and when fully developed, the size of total floor area will be about 80 times of the Mid Valley Kuala Lumpur. While reportedly the implementation of the project is to be spread out over some 20 years, still it seems likely a project that will cause serious imbalance in the property market. Already we were told the property market in Iskandar Malaysia has started to cool off. Will Forest City bring in too much supply that inevitably causes a glut and then triggers a crash that will hurt house-owners, investors and the larger economy in Iskandar Malaysia?

With the above points I urged the government to stop the Forest City project and order the developer CPG to repair the damages already caused to the environment.

For this dialogue session ostensibly to fulfil the EIA requirements, the developer and authorities have much to prove that they are genuinely interested in furnishing the public with complete and correct information. Otherwise, one could not help but to see this plainly as a public relation exercise devoid of any meaning to the public.

Cheo Yee How

DAP JOHOR SPOKEPERSON ON ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES & SA FOR
PENGKALAN RINTING

Media statement by Cheo Yee How in Johor Bahru on Monday,
22nd September 2014

<< Previous post (<http://dapmalaysia.org/en/statements/2014/09/22/19173/>)

Next post >> (<http://dapmalaysia.org/en/statements/2014/09/23/19175/>)

DAP Malaysia

DAP Malaysia
Ibu Pejabat Kebangsaan,
Jalan Yew (off Jalan Pudu),
55100 Kuala Lumpur.

Publications

- The Rocket
(<http://therocket.com.my/>)
- Roketkini
(<http://roketkini.com.my/>)

About Us

- The Party
(<http://www.dap.org.my/about-us/the-party>)
- Our Objectives

Take Action

- Donate
(<https://dapmalaysia.org/en/donate>)
- Get involved

DAP on the web

- Facebook
(<https://facebook.com/DAPMalaysia>)
- Twitter

Tel +60 (0)3 9200 5000
Fax +60 (0)3 9200 7000
dap@dapmalaysia.org

Download

- DAP Song
(http://dapmalaysia.org/repository/DAP_Anthem_720P.wmv)
- DAP Symbol
(</en/archive/rocket-symbol/>)
- Party Declarations
(</en/about-us/vision-mission/party-declarations>)
- Party Constitution
(</en/about-us/vision-mission/party-constitution>)
- Symbol
(</en/about-us/symbol>)
- Our History
(</en/about-us/our-history>)

- Our Objectives
(</en/about-us/vision-mission/our-objectives>)
- Party Policies
(</en/about-us/vision-mission/party-policies>)
- Party

- Take Action
(</en/take-action>)
- Get Involved
(</en/take-action/get-involved>)
- Join us
(</en/take-action/join-us>)
- Volunteer
(</en/take-action/volunteer>)

- Twitter
(<https://twitter.com/DAPMalaysia>)
- YouTube
(<https://youtube.com/videodap>)
- RSS Feed
(/feed/?post_type=statement)

