

Penang heritage buildings torn down to make way for hospital expansion



Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow looking at a model of the Island Hospital expansion project in George Town, Penang, today. Pix by NSTP/Ramdzan Masiam

By MUHAMMAD YUSRI MUZAMIR (/authors/muhammad-yusri-muzamir) - December 2, 2018 @ 7:24pm

GEORGE TOWN: The state government today said it tore down several heritage buildings in Jalan Peel, here, to make way for the expansion of a private hospital.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said approvals to tear down the buildings were issued by Penang Island City Council.

"The place where you (newsmen) are sitting used to sit a heritage building which had been torn down with approval from the council," he said after a groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion of Island Hospital today.

"A private hospital, equipped with 600 beds and offering some 2,000 jobs, will be built on this 2.83ha site. It will take five years to complete from next year.

"It will be equipped with a medical complex, suites and medical tourism hotel, which will serve as a hub in the country."

There had been allegations that the state government had hastily approved an application from a private developer to tear down a heritage building in Jalan Peel to make way for the Medical City mega project.

There was also controversy because the project involved a 7:1 plot ratio, above the 6:1 ratio set.

Besides that, the developer was also given a development charge exemption by the state government, estimated at RM26 million.