

Guan Eng defends RM2b investment to build private hospital on state land

Posted on 18 May 2017 - 03:17pm

Last updated on 18 May 2017 - 04:27pm

Aaron Ngui

newsdesk@thesundaily.com ^[1]

[Print](#) ^[2]



GEORGE TOWN: The Penang government has defended a RM2 billion investment for a private hospital which has been criticised by several quarters as the facility sits on state land leased to the company.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng (*pix*) said his government was not in the business of selling land, pointing out his administration sold 42.9ha of land for RM1.1102 billion since 2008.

He contrasted the figure to the previous Barisan Nasional (BN) government which he said sold 1,481ha of land for RM1.0586 billion from the early 1990s to 2008.

"We sold land less than 36 times but we got more money," he said in a press conference today and pointed out the investment will create 2,000 job opportunities.

On criticism there was no open tender for the transaction, ^[3] Lim likened such investments to multinationals coming into the state to invest.

"Here we negotiated directly to secure the investment," he said and added the land would not be transferred to the hospital until the RM156 million price was fully paid.

Penang Housing, Town and Country Planning Committee chairman Jagdeep Singh meanwhile said the present government has to date initiated 17 affordable housing projects which will deliver a total of 27,230 units while approval has been given to the private sector to build 36,759 affordable housing units.

He also turned the issue around by questioning the Federal Government for not delivering "even one physical unit of affordable housing under their affordable housing programmes such as PR1MA to Penang".

Jagdeep also said the Urban Wellbeing, Housing and Local Government Ministry has yet to respond after the state had identified sites for People's Housing Programme (PPR) to be built.

"Surely BN must answer to the people of Penang as to their failure for providing affordable housing for Penangites," he said.