

26 MAY 2003

Koh-Development

PENANG HAS LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT PLAN

PENANG, May 26 (Bernama) -- The state government has a long-term development plan which will be implemented in stages to ensure that no area is left out of the development, said Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

He said the Second Penang Strategic Development Plan (PSDP2), launched in 2001 and covering a 10-year period, aimed to ensure that continuous development was implemented in a balanced manner.

He said development in the Tanjung Tokong area, for example, was launched some time back and would take quite a long time for completion.

Speaking at a press conference at the State Legislative Assembly building, here, he explained that the state government had actually handed over a 16-hectare (40-acre) site to the Urban Development Authority (UDA) for development since the 1980's.

However, he said, UDA had only utilised a small portion of the land allocated for development into several phases of flats for residents in Kampung Tanjung Tokong.

"The state government will urge UDA, which had recently restructured itself, to speed up the implementation of development projects in the area," he said.

He said this when asked to comment on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's statement on Saturday that development in the state should be balanced and that no one should be left out of the mainstream of development.

Koh said Penang welcomed the prime minister's advice and would continue to ensure that the people were not left out and that balanced development was achieved in the state.

He said unbalanced development not only occurred in Penang but in all economies and other countries as well.

"As a comparison, squatter settlements are still found in Kuala Lumpur which is considered to be developed compared to the other states. What the PM (prime minister) saw was the old area which is the Kampung Tanjung Tokong which has yet to be developed," he said.

He also said that Dr Mahathir was not disappointed with Penang, on the contrary, he was happy to see the rapid development in the state and in his speech at the launching of the Tanjung Pinang land reclamation project covering more than 300 hectares in Tanjung Tokong, the prime minister had praised the development of the state which had many skyscrapers.

"He was at no time upset, he was actually happy for Penang and concerned for the poor and the needy," he said.

He said most of the areas that had not been developed were located on private land but the state government promised to assist in speeding up the process.

-- BERNAMA

ZU AO