

'Lim betrayed Penangites by privatising land'

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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng is not interested in solving the problem of Bayan Mutiara land but is more inclined to involve Umno leaders in its controversy, says state Umno Youth.

The wing's chief Shaikh Hussein Mydin (left) expressed disappointment that Lim continues to politicise and condemn Umno leaders to avoid solving the controversy surrounding the sale of the 103-acre land.

Shaikh Hussein said the development of Bayan Mutiara is not Umno's problem but concerns all Penangites, whether they are wealthy or poor, work in white or blue colour jobs.

He criticised the privatisation of Bayan Mutiara land as a "betrayal" of Penangites since the original plan was designed by state-owned PDC Properties and PDC Consultancy.

"These people are mostly Penangites, professionals and have the experience and expertise compared to the private company which had been appointed," said Shaikh Hussein.

Lim recently appointed Singapore consultants Surbana International Consultants, the privatised arm of Singapore's Housing and Development Board, to design the affordable homes project in Batu Kawan.

According to Lim, Surbana was chosen as it was one of the best consultancy companies for affordable homes in Asia and the world.

Money for the project, involving about 12,000 homes costing between RM42,000 and RM220,000, was derived from the RM1.07 billion sale of the Bayan Mutiara land, which is located at the south of Penang bridge.

NONEShaikh Hussein said the planning of the entire project was approved between 2008 and 2009, where the consultants were PDC Properties and PDC Consultancy.

One of the five blocks of condominium had been approved then, and the plan included a commercial area, plots for a school and a mosque.

Shaikh Hussein also questioned the need to privatise the project when state-owned PDC Nusabina, an experienced sister company of the PDC, can carry out construction work.

"Lim has destroyed all the hard work and expertise of the PDC when the whole project was given to Tropicana Ivory Sdn Bhd, a joint venture of Ivory Properties Group Berhad and Dijaya Corporation," he added.

Dijaya is owned by Danny Tan, the younger brother of business tycoon Vincent Tan. Ivory won the bid over Umno-owned SP Setia Berhad for the Bayan Mutiara land, which Lim said was carried out via an open tender.

However, yesterday, Penang Umno liason chief Zainal Abidin Osman showed "proof" that Lim conducted the sale via a negotiated tender, and demanded the CM to quit politics.

'Developer will profit RM3 billion'

"Doesn't Lim see that what is happening now does not benefit PDC and will not improve the experience and expertise of its professional staff?"

"Does Lim know that the gross development value of Bayan Mutiara is RM10 billion, and the developer will profit at least 30 percent or RM3 billion?" he queried.

"The profit of at least RM3 billion can be obtained by PDC itself if they carry out the development themselves, as the development plan had already been approved earlier," he added.

Shaikh Hussein asked if Lim can pressure Ivory to appoint PDC Properties and PDC Consultancy as consultants for the entire project.

He also questioned if Lim can pressure the developer to appoint PDC Nusabina as contractor for the whole project.

"It is clear that Lim did not only sell off some Penang land but also the fate of all Penangites, especially those who are poor and middle class," he added.

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