

Guan Eng: Has PM forgotten he witnesses Penang tunnel MoU signing?
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has hit out at Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak for saying yesterday that the state's undersea tunnel project was [wasteful](#) and unnecessary.

"Why is the prime minister suddenly coming out with a statement about the tunnel project? Saying that it is wasteful because there are already two bridges in Penang?" Lim asked at a press conference in Komtar today.

"I have said before that the tunnel is our future plan to address the state's traffic congestion.

"The tunnel will only be ready by 2027 and by the time, the traffic congestion would have worsened and the two bridges will no longer be enough as they would have reached their maximum traffic capacity," he explained.

Lim said Najib may have forgotten that he witnessed the signing of a [memorandum of understanding](#) (MoU) in April 2011 between the Penang government and China's Beijing Urban Construction Group (BUCG) to consider building the tunnel and highway project.

Lim sought to refresh Najib's memory by showing a photo of the event, in which he (Najib) stands beside the chief minister.

Wen Jiabao, who was then Chinese premier, and a BUCG official had also attended the ceremony in Kuala Lumpur.

Lim asked why Najib had not criticised the construction of the tunnel back then.

"But why at the time, Najib did not say it is wasteful of public funds or not necessary? That was in April 2011," Lim said.

"Why is it that only after seven years, he is saying the project is wasteful, is it because of elections?

"Or is he influenced by all the lies made by MCA leaders like its president Liow Tiong Lai (*photo*) and deputy chief Wee Ka Siong?" Lim asked.

"We urge the prime minister to explain why he has suddenly made the remark that the undersea tunnel is wasteful after seven years of his witnessing a MoU signed between the China firm and Penang government."

Lim said he preferred to give Najib the benefit of the doubt as he is a very busy man and may have forgotten the MoU event.

Open tender

BN leaders have been hitting Lim hard with a series of claims against the tunnel, hinting at a mega-scandal involving the RM6.3 billion project, which was awarded to Consortium Zenith Construction Sdn Bhd in 2013.

It is now the subject of a major probe by the MACC, with more than 70 individuals questioned and four high-ranking officials nabbed over their involvement in the project.

In his press conference today, Lim reminded Najib that although the MoU was signed, the project had been awarded to Zenith via an open tender.

BUCG was then part of Zenith, the special purpose vehicle (SPV) charged with implementing the project which will link the island to Butterworth on the mainland.

However, in 2016, BUCG was dropped from the SPV after a fatal crane accident in Kuala Lumpur.

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