

PICC tender called despite fierce protests
Malaysiakini.com
June 26, 2010

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has turned a deaf ear to local groups' protests against the controversial Penang International Convention Centre (PICC) to re-open the tender process for the RM50 million project.

Lim, when asked about opposition to the project, questioned why protestors had not kicked up a fuss about the existing Putrajaya Convention Centre, worth a whopping RM600 million.

NONEHe justified the building of the PICC by turning the tables on protestors, saying they should question the centre in Putrajaya, which has become "a total failure".

"That is why the federal government wanted to move the Parliament building there, so that they can make use of it (the empty spaces)," he said.

Local NGOs and individuals including Municipal Councilor Lim Kah Cheng (right) have rejected the project seeing no benefit in it for Penangites.

Detractors have set up an online petition to campaign against the project.

Wasting public funds

They questioned the feasibility of the project and the need for it as Penangites already have the Penang Aquatic Centre and Penang International Sports Arena to contend with.

Financial prudence of the project including the accountability and transparency of its tender process have also turned contentious for those who feel the building would be a 'waste of public funds'.

lim guan eng comments on keshvinder quit dap 160610However, Lim (right) said since the call for an open tender for PICC last December went unanswered, he was calling for proposals to construct the building, which will cover an area of 7,000 sq meter, facing Jalan Tun Dr Awang.

Despite fierce opposition, Lim reiterated that the project, the cost of which will be borne by the Penang Municipal Council, would be beneficial to local residents.

"We hope to get wide publicity for the tender so that we can attract investors for the project," said Lim, at a press conference in his office today.

"Although there has been no submission for the first open tender, the project will proceed by recalling a request for proposal," he added.

Lim clarified that the company winning the bid must also upgrade the Penang Aquatic Centre and also PISA, which includes managing and running the two centres.

The state plans to announce details of the tender by July 5, followed by a briefing on July 19.

The tender application closes on Sep 19, giving companies a period of two months to submit

their bids.

Copyright © 1999-2007 Mkini Dotcom Sdn. Bhd.
Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/135670>