

**Gerakan man pressures Koh to clarify landscam**  
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**Athi Veerangan**

A former Gerakan member of Parliament in Penang has called on the party-led former administration in Penang to explain on a land-scam unearthed by the new administration. MCPX

Former Jelutong parliamentarian Lee Kah Choon hit out at the previous government led by Gerakan acting president Koh Tsu Koon for being silent on the allegation of land improprieties.

koh tsu koon and penang pulau pinang 100907He said the onus was on Koh's previous administration to clarify its role and clear the people's doubts on the alleged land scam that had siphoned off millions from the state coffers.

Lee said it was imperative on the point of political accountability that the previous administration and the recently formed Barisan Nasional shadow executive council to take the responsibility and shade some light to the pressing issue for the sake of public interests.

"I am surprised like everybody on the deaf silence of the previous administration and the shadow exco on the alleged land scam.

"The previous state government leaders should clear the people's doubts on whether or not the allegation had substance," the former Gerakan strongman told Malaysiakini.

If the allegation was true, added Lee, a former parliamentary secretary to the health ministry, the previous administration should clarify on what legal steps it had executed to resolve the alleged land scam during its time.

If the allegation was untrue, he said at least the former BN government shall clear the air publicly and offer honest cooperation to the present state government to investigating the case thoroughly and professionally.

### **Learning bitter lessons**

If the previous administration did not act professionally in this issue, he said not only that public suspicion on its role would deepen but it would also prove that the state BN did not learn from its lesson from the recent electoral debacle.

liberal forum privatisation lee kah choonHe said a political tsunami took place in the general election because the electorates were demanding transparency, openness, fairness, equality and justice.

"The previous and present administrations and the shadow state cabinet should perform to fulfill these expectations," he said.

Last week, Lee relinquished all his party posts including as party deputy secretary-general, state assistant secretary, Jelutong division and Jalan Jelutong branch chairpersons, national central committee and working committee, and state working committee members.

He will, however remain as ordinary member and will wait for the state and national party elections scheduled next year on his political future.

His decision to quit all party posts was to take responsibility to the party's disastrous show in the country's recent 12th general election.

Since taking over power of the state government, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has uncovered suspicious land dealings that had caused the state government to lose millions of ringgit.

### **A new probe**

lim guan eng and penangDissatisfied with the findings of an earlier Anti-Corruption Agency (ACA) investigation done in 2006, the DAP-led state government has already set up a three-man special investigating team headed by the Deputy Chief Minister I Mohammad Fairus Khairuddin, to carry out its own probe in the scam.

Others in the committee are Deputy Chief Minister II Prof Dr P Ramasamy and state executive councillor Phee Boon Poh.

The committee's probe would start this week, picking up findings of the ACA investigation as its head-start.

Former Deputy Chief Minister Abdul Rashid Abdullah was the executive councilor handling the land portfolio under the previous state administration.

All official executive documents on land dealings in Abdul Rashid's Komtar office were among the files that had gone missing from most executive councilors' offices before the new state government was sworn in.

The present state government learnt about the land scam when perusing documents available at the state and district land offices, and state secretariat.

Once the special team completes its probe, the state government would get a clearer picture on the amount of money, the acreage and number of lands, and individuals, agencies or companies involved in the scam.

Improprieties are learnt have happened in acquisition, conversion, development and title transfer of land with the bulk of them had allegedly took place in Penang mainland.

"The investigation should be carried out professionally, fairly and openly without any malice to safeguard public interests," urged Lee.