

**CM: Give us the cash, we'll do our own projects**  
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Nevermind if the federal government has slashed the funds and revoked vital projects for Penang under its Mid-Term Review of the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9MP).  
MCPX

The state government now wants the cash to implement projects of its own for the benefit of Penangites.

lim guan eng interview 290408 02 "The federal government should give us the cash originally set aside for the cancelled projects," said Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng in a statement today.

"We can carry out our own projects to reduce the people's rising cost burden caused by high prices," he added.

Since the federal government has not replaced cancelled projects with alternative plans, he said the state government was ever ready to take the money to carry out agricultural development projects to improve the state's self-sufficiency in food economies and security.

He said the onus was on the federal government to prove it did not act out of political vengeance to punish Penangites for replacing Barisan Nasional with a Pakatan Rakyat state government.

**'People's government'**

The DAP leader is determined not to allow Penang-born Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's administration to treat his state government like a "doormat."

"Unlike the previous docile state government, we are the people's government. We will demonstrate our resilience, self-reliance and ability to develop the state in our own way," he said.

Lim has yet to come to terms with the federal government's decision to cancel the RM2 billion monorail, RM1.5 billion Penang Outer Ring Road (Porr) and RM1.1 billion Mengkuang Dam expansion projects.

To add insult to injury, Putrajaya cut off another allotted RM100 million supposedly to carry out minor projects like the RM40 million upgrading works on Penang Hill railway.

Penang's original allocation under the 9MP was RM6.152 billion or 3.1 percent of the total RM200 billion budget. But after the review, its share was slashed to RM1.452 billion, constituting only 0.6 percent of the increased total allocation of RM230 billion.

"If it was not a punitive action, the federal government should justify the reasons behind the 80 percent cut for Penang," he said, saying that the huge drop in federal allocation tantamounts to undermining and sabotaging the northern island-state's economy.

## **Minister slammed**

Lim also did not spare Finance Minister II Nor Mohamad Yakcop for criticising his government as being obsessed with mega projects.

He said the minister was attempting to conceal the federal government's victimisation of Penang.

Lim also accused the Tasek Gelugor member of Parliament of trying to 'mask his guilty conscience' for backing drastic cuts for his home state development funds.

Since Nor Mohamed suggested that the state government focus on improving the economy, Lim said his administration was willing to take RM 4.7 billion cash to replace those cancelled projects.

He said the state government will wait for a final reply from Abdullah to Lim's letter seeking a review on the cancellation of the projects before proceeding with alternative plans

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