

**Penang tells Koh to wake up to reality**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 23 — Penang has fired another volley in a roiling debate with the previous Gerakan-led administration, insisting that Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon's claim that investments take more than five years to be realised does not "tally with the real situation on the ground."

Datuk Lee Kah Choon, the former Gerakan leader who was appointed chief of Invest Penang by current Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, refuted today Koh's claim that shifting an entire company to Penang took much longer than the "weeks" the DAP-led administration claimed on Saturday.

"When we talk about investment into Penang, we are not talking about 'shifting the entire company' as 99 per cent of investment into Penang involves the investors' expansion or investment into new facility to utilise the comparative advantage that Penang can offer.

"He is not only sleep talking but overslept and, worse, refuses to wake up," Lee (picture) said in a statement.

Koh, who was Penang CM from 1990 to 2008, had first taken credit for Penang's five-fold investment surge for 2010 in an interview with The Malaysian Insider last week.

The Gerakan president charged DAP secretary-general Lim of "skilfully using" the media to claim credit for the "solid foundation" of various development projects laid down by his administration.

Invest Penang chief Lee then rubbished the claim by saying that the Malaysian Industrial Development Authority (MIDA) approved incentives for new investments within weeks and that investment deals were struck within a year, not five as claimed by Koh.

But Koh then said over the weekend that there was "at least one case" where a company had taken years to move its facility to Penang.

Lee, a former Gerakan deputy secretary-general, shot back today, stating that MIDA had tabulated 128 different investment deals for 2010 worth RM12.24 billion, up from RM2.17 billion in 2009.

"The argument that investment comes into Penang after more than five years of courting neither tallies with the real situation on the ground nor MIDA's Client Charter," he said, referring to the agency's promise to decide on applications for incentives within six weeks.

Lee said that the logical conclusion, if Koh persisted with his argument that investment took over five years to materialise, was that negotiations that had stalled during the previous administration had been rekindled after Pakatan Rakyat (PR) took over in 2008.

MIDA statistics also showed Penang was second only to Selangor for the year up to May 2011, getting RM4.49 billion in approved manufacturing projects, or just below the RM4.74 billion Selangor received for the same period.

In its latest issue dated August 13, international business weekly The Economist dubbed

Penang “the first custom-made city of globalisation” and credited Lim for boosting the port city’s revival by axing a racially-biased economic policy in the state to create a more level-playing field that appealed to foreign investors.

The international business magazine praise for Lim is seen as an indictment of Koh’s rule of the island state, which began prospering under his mentor, the late Tun Lim Chong Eu, before the Princeton graduate took over as chief minister.

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