

Guan Eng denies approving Berjaya's Penang Hill plans
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By Boo Su-Lyn

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 4 — Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng today denied approving purported Berjaya Corporation Bhd development projects for Penang Hill, pointing out that the company has not even sent him any such proposal.

He also accused the state opposition of concocting the claims, adding that the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC) has yet to investigate a RM40 million land dispute linked to businessman Tang Hak Ju.

“Penang PR (Pakatan Rakyat) state government will not be distracted by such baseless accusations and lies, but will instead press for BN (Barisan Nasional) to come clean on BN’s RM300 million scandals on land scams, Pulau Jerejak and loss of MPSP (Majlis Perbandaran Seberang Perai) funds,” said Lim in a statement today.

“Instead of expressing remorse over such loss of public funds, BN has continued to brazenly lie about the Penang state government secretly approving Berjaya’s development plans for Penang Hill,” added the DAP secretary-general.

The state-run funicular train that services Penang Hill was given a RM73 million upgrade earlier this year.

The train service was halted on February 25 last year so that the old cable-run carriages, which had been in use since 1923, could be replaced with a new electric-powered system.

Lim also accused Penang Gerakan chief Datuk Dr Teng Hock Nan of lying repeatedly about the development of the iconic Penang Hill.

“The first lie is when Teng publicly called for a people’s uprising on August 26, 2011 against the Penang PR state government’s revival of Berjaya’s original plans to develop Penang Hill,” he said.

“When challenged to show proof that such approval had been given to Berjaya, Teng made a 180-degree U-turn by lying on August 29, 2011 that he never made this claim. There is now a third, newest lie by Teng that I had held secret meetings with Berjaya on reviving their original plans for the development of Penang Hill,” he added.

The Bagan MP stressed that Berjaya — one of the largest companies in Malaysia — has never bid for development projects for the Craig Hotel, the hawker complex and the canopy walk.

“All projects on Penang Hill are carried out individually under open tender,” said Lim.

“The PR state government will not bow to threats from BN Penang to sue the state government for exposing their scandals, but will go for a public pamphleteering campaign to ask BN to come clean and return as much money as possible of the money lost to the people of Penang,” he added.

Lim said the pamphlets would reveal RM40 million dispute linked with Tang, the RM30 million Pulau Jerejak scandal, and MPSP's losses of RM230 million.

The Penang CM urged the Auditor-General last January to hasten a probe on the Pulau Jerejak island resort development that allegedly cost the state RM30 million.

The 362ha island off the eastern coast of Penang once served as a penal and leper colony, but was turned into a resort by a joint-venture company approved by former chief minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

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