

Utusan likens Guan Eng to Kuan Yew for Johor remarks
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 25 — Utusan Malaysia likened Lim Guan Eng to Singapore's Lee Kuan Yew for allegedly bad-mouthing Johor, reminding Lim how the outspoken former prime minister was once forced to apologise to Malaysia for issuing similar insults.

The Umno-owned daily today demanded that Lim followed suit with a similar apology to the Johor Sultan, the state government and its residents, saying his remarks about the state's crime rate was "insulting and contemptuous".

Awang Selamat, a pseudonym used for the daily's editors, pointed out that Lee's 1997 statement about Johor had brought on a storm of protest from Malaysians, badly affecting Singapore's diplomatic ties with its southeast Asian neighbour.

According to old media reports, Lee had said in an affidavit for a libel case at the time that Johor was "notorious for shootings, muggings and carjackings".

"The question now is, is LGE (Lim) following the mindset of LKY (Lee), a foreign leader who often issues hurtful comments about Malaysia?"

"Does it also mirror DAP's stand to share the aspirations of PAP (Singapore's ruling People's Action Party) which was founded by LKY?" Awang wrote today.

It was pointed out that both DAP and PAP were born of the same "seeds" and were the same party prior to Singapore's exclusion in 1965 from Malaysia.

Awang was referring to the latest accusation that Lim had bad-mouthed Johor during an interview with an Australian radio station by describing the southern state as crime-ridden and rife with kidnappings.

The remarks were later construed as an attempt by Lim to lure away Australian investment dollars meant for Johor and divert them to Penang where he is chief minister.

The report moved Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders like deputy prime minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin to accuse the DAP secretary-general of trying to sabotage rival states in order to boost Penang's investment climate.

But Lim (picture) yesterday denied issuing the remarks, saying that he had witnesses to prove this.

"As usual, LGE surely has his excuses, if not denial. But Awang, like many others, can accurately evaluate who this DAP leader truly is," Awang said.

He said as a responsible chief minister and a Malaysian, Lim should not be badmouthing any state in the country and should instead promote the nation in order to attract more investment here.

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