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State to help materialise the Penang Medical and Digital Technology Hub

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THE Penang government will be looking into ways to expediate the setting up of the Penang Medical and Digital Technology Hub in Bandar Cassia, Batu Kawan.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow said the proposed project is still at the concept stage.

“The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between Penang Development Corporation (PDC) and iHeal Health Sdn Bhd to develop this project back in January this year.



Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow

“PDC has provided some 295 acres for the proposed project and iHeal Health is responsible in setting up this medical and digital technology hub.

“But unfortunately, due to the unforeseen circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 situation and travel restrictions, the company is unable to meet and discuss more with interested foreign parties. In addition, some other technical issues exacerbated the problem and caused a delay.

“And with travel restrictions being gradually lifted, we expect the international border to be fully reopened soon. Thus, we have given the company another few months to work on the details of the project.

“After all, this is a very unique project and it is a very challenging one. But if we manage to make it a reality, it will be worth it.

“This is mainly because the project is capable of helping to promote Penang as an Asean hub for medical and digital technology,” said Chow during an online meeting with Asean Business Advisory Council Malaysia (Asean-BAC Malaysia) at his office in Komtar today.

It is understood that the plan is to set up medical facilities of international standards as well as to offer excellent healthcare services.

PDC chief executive officer Datuk Mohd Bazid Abd Kahar, who was also present during the online meeting, said the proposed hub would also house the ASEAN Institute of Transplantation, a new entity that aims to transform the region’s organ transplant ecosystem and emulate the success of organ sharing networks in the United States and Europe.

“As Asean countries come together in areas of politics, economy and defence, healthcare can be another common bond to enhance the prosperity and wellbeing of the region.

“In this context, the setting up of the ASEAN Institute of Transplantation will be a catalyst for the growth of organ transplantation in the region,” he added.

Meanwhile, InvestPenang chief executive officer Datuk Loo Lee Lian said the hospitals in Penang are recognised under international accreditation, providing quality services to medical tourists at competitive pricing.

“And according to the Malaysia Healthcare Travel Council (MHTC), Indonesia, Singapore, and the Philippines are among the top healthcare travellers to Malaysia.

“So, when the Penang government makes the project a reality, this will definitively boost the medical tourism in the state,” she said.

Among those present during the online meeting were Asean-BAC Malaysia chairman Tan Sri Mohd Munir Abdul Majid, Asean-BAC Malaysia council member Raja Singham and Asean-BAC Malaysia council member Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon.

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