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Koh-MCA

APPOINTMENT HAS NOT JEOPARDISED GERAKAN-MCA RELATIONSHIP, SAYS KOH

PULAU PINANG, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- The decision to appoint Gerakan leaders to key positions in the state has not jeopardised the relationship between Gerakan and MCA, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon said today.

Denying that there was ever any "rift" between Gerakan and MCA, Koh who is Gerakan vice president, said all the Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties, including those in the state, had been working very closely together for the benefit of the people.

"MCA, as a component party, has also played a positive role at both state and federal levels. I am sure such spirit of cooperation among component parties will continue," he said after witnessing the signing of a sales and purchase agreement between the Penang Development Corporation and Padova Corporation Sdn Bhd, here.

He was asked whether the decision to maintain a Gerakan leader as the Pulau Pinang Municipal Council (MPPP) president has jeopardised the relationship between the two parties.

MCA has, on various occasions, requested that its leaders be appointed to key administrative posts in the state.

Its party members here were said to be dissatisfied with MCA's small participation in the state's administration.

Koh said the appointment of the state Gerakan secretary, Dr Teng Hock Nan as the new MPPP president did not mean that there were no other leaders suitable for that post or that the post was only meant for Gerakan.

He said the appointment should not disunite Gerakan and MCA although sometimes there could be some difference of opinion.

He likened the situation as "a difference of opinion between husband and wife" who would reconcile once their problems were solved.

However, he said, whatever requests MCA may have, it should be discussed at federal level and in the spirit of the BN.

Asked to comment on former MPPP President Datuk Tan Ghim Hwa's appointment as Penang Port Commission chairman, Koh said, Tan was appointed based on his wide experience in the government service and society.

Koh said he made the recommendation to appoint Tan to the Prime Minister as there was a vacancy for the chairmanship post and especially since Tan's contract as MPPP president was expiring. Tan's contract expires on Feb 20.

On whether he would contest for the vice-president's post in the coming Gerakan general assembly, Koh said it was too early for him to decide because the branch election of the party had not even started.

However, he said, whatever decision he would make would be in the best interest of the people and the party, adding that he was now concentrating his effort and energy on doing a good job for Penang.

Meanwhile, MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said it was up to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to appoint anyone for any post in Penang.

Ling, who earlier today visited the North Butterworth Cargo Terminal in Butterworth, told reporters the BN component parties had held a discussion on the MPPP's post and had reached a consensus before relaying the decision to Dr Mahathir who made the final decision.

During the discussion, MCA had requested that its leaders in the state be given a chance to hold important position to reflect its success in the last general election, he added. -- Bernama