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IPU-Malaysia

IPU TO SEND A MISSION HERE ON LIM GUAN ENG'S CASE

KUALA LUMPUR, April 13 (Bernama) -- The International Parliamentary Union (IPU) will send a mission to Malaysia to gather further information on the case of Kota Melaka MP Lim Guan Eng who was sentenced to 36 months' jail recently for sedition and false publication, Opposition Leader Lim Kit Siang said today.

He said this was decided by the IPU at its 162nd Council meeting in Windhoek, Namibia, last Saturday.

The decision was made "in view of the important issues involved in the case", he said.

"The International Parliamentary Council (IPC) resolution, among other things, said it is appalled at the decision handed down by the Appeals Court setting aside the fines and imposing the three-year prison term sought by the prosecution," he told a news conference at the Parliament House lobby today.

The Court of Appeal on April 1 dismissed Guan Eng's appeals against conviction and sentence, allowed the cross-appeals by the Public Prosecutor and enhanced the RM15,000 fines for the two offences to three years' jail.

Lim said the IPC expressed concern at the public statement made by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad defending the 36-month jail term on Guan Eng which, in its view, would make it difficult for the Federal Court to exercise its judicial jurisdiction on Guan Eng's appeal.

Lim, who is also the MP for Tanjong, said the date for the mission to be here had yet to be decided as the arrangement would have to be made by the government.

"This will be the second such IPU mission to Malaysia, the first being in 1988 when they came and met detainees of the Operasi Lalang in Kamunting," said Lim who distributed copies of the IPC resolution to reporters.

In the resolution, the IPU, noting that Guan Eng was now free on bail, said that it deemed it necessary to gather further information directly from the authorities, the parliamentarian concerned and his lawyers, and consequently entrusted the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians with carrying out an on-site mission.

It requested the Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians to continue examining the case and report to it (IPU) at its next session in September.

Guan Eng, who is also the DAP deputy secretary-general, was present at the news conference. -- BERNAMA

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