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Kit Siang denies nepotism in treatment of Guan Eng

PETALING JAYA, Mon. - DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang today denied there was nepotism in the party's treatment of his son, Guan Eng.

Defining nepotism as "favouritism shown to relatives or friends in conferring offices or privileges", he said if he was guilty of nepotism, "it must be the most unique and unprecedented type of nepotism in the world".

He said Guan Eng only had a prison term in store for him, on top of an 18-month detention under the Internal Security Act 11 years ago.

He also said Guan Eng, who is DAP deputy secretary-general, had given up his bank officer's job to "plunge into the political maelstrom, forsaking a bed of roses for a crown of thorns".

Lim was speaking at a Press conference where he "challenged" the Prime Minister to establish a royal commission of inquiry to look into nepotism, and the media to report his statement prominently.

He also said it was in "poor taste" for Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to comment that he (Lim) would appoint his son, wife and other family members into the Cabinet if DAP formed the Government.

"I have asked (Dr) Mahathir to apologise to my wife ... I had never dragged the wife of the Prime Minister, Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohamed Ali, into any political controversy."

Lim also said the "gag order" was not made by him but by DAP disciplinary committee chairman, Ahmad Nor.

"If this is a gag order ... then I am also gagged as party secretary-general," he said.

He maintained that he was "gagged" when asked if Sabah DAP vice-chairman Oswald Mojingol's resignation meant a widening split in the party, and that if he made a comment, he could be "hailed up".

He also said he would not be surprised if the general election was called "as early as August", but declined to reply when asked if the DAP was ready.

Lim challenged the media to publish his statement prominently, saying that this was a test of Press freedom and mass media fair play.

He repeated this call when reporters asked him several questions including about DAP members' comments on his "authoritarian rule".

He said he would reply these questions if the Press showed itself to be fair by carrying his statement prominently.

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