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No finger-pointing, warns Keng Yaik

KUALA LUMPUR, Sun. - Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik warned against "finger-pointing" on the question of nepotism and cronyism unless those who levelled such accusations could substantiate their claims.

"Such accusations cannot be accepted politically," he added.

He said only politicians who had a hidden agenda would do such a thing.

"As far as I know, our Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will not entertain such accusations. He (Dr Mahathir) will only accept sincere suggestions and recommendations."

Dr Lim, who is also Minister of Primary Industries, said this in his winding-up speech to points raised by delegates during the debate on the presidential address at the 27th Gerakan Delegates Conference.

"If one does not have the facts, then one should not make claims on nepotism and cronyism. Gerakan leaders and members have shown their maturity by not indulging in finger-pointing on these issues."

Dr Lim said this in response to issues raised by delegates during the two-day conference.

On the question of privatisation which was hotly debated by the delegates, Dr Lim assured Youth chairman Datuk Chang Ko Youn that the party would continue to support him over his recent comments on the proposed privatisation of solid waste disposal.

Chang had recently criticised Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh over the proposed privatisation which led to an exchange of views in the mass media.

Dr Lim said the party was not against privatisation but wanted to ensure that such moves would not further burden the people financially.

"Privatisation implementation, in this case, is questionable."

He, however, assured that the party would work closely with the Minister concerned and provide constructive suggestions.

Penang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon in his reply told delegates how he had convinced the Federal Government not to allow PLUS to increase the toll by six per cent annually for the Penang bridge.

"If this had happened, people using the bridge would have to pay as much as RM40 in 25 years' time. Negotiations have resulted in a hike of two per cent annually and users will only be charged RM13 during the same period."

Koh, who is also party vice-president, said Gerakan would ensure that all privatised projects are in line with the basic principle of reducing the financial and manpower burden of the Government.

Wanita chief Datuk Kee Phaik Cheen called on the party to set up a pre-general election task force.

"There are fears that there will be a pendulum swing in favour of the Opposition," she added.

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