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DAP (News Focus)

KIT SIANG SYNONYMOUS WITH PERSONAL ATTACKS

PULAU PINANG, Nov 24 (Bernama) -- Much as he wants or pledges to, DAP secretary-general Lim Kit Siang finds it hard to shake off the habit of resorting to personal attacks against Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders in his campaigning.

Although Lim has reminded DAP leaders and candidates to refrain from indulging in or replying to personal attacks, he is obviously not leading by example.

Despite the so-called "soft approach" that Lim has vowed to take, personal attacks have featured prominently in his every ceramah.

And Pulau Pinang Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon has been among his favourite punching bags as Lim tried to link several projects implemented by the state government to Koh's perceived weakness.

One of the projects that Lim has been harping on is the autopont flyover in Jalan Masjid Negeri which he has dubbed the "gostan" (go astern) project.

Lim said the RM7.95 million proposed flyover was reflective of a "gostan government" which did not pay heed to the people's opposition to the project.

Lim has also challenged Koh, Pulau Pinang Municipal Council (MPPP) president Dr Teng Hock Nan and other BN leaders to reverse their cars on the flyover simultaneously to see if it can be done.

Saying the project would mar Pulau Pinang's beauty, Lim alleged that it involved financial irregularities and power abuse by MPPP and the state government.

The project has stirred controversy because it is meant for one-way traffic, giving rise to questions on what would happen in the event of vehicle breakdowns or accidents on the flyover.

Teng somewhat added fuel to the matter when he jokingly said motorists could "gostan" (reverse) their cars if their path was blocked by stalled vehicles or because of accidents.

Lim pounced on the idea to criticise Koh and Teng for being allegedly weak and insensitive to the people's interests when implementing projects.

Pulau Pinang under the leadership of Koh had become a "gostan government" which implemented projects for the interests of certain groups without consulting the affected people, Lim said.

Lim used this to justify moving his parliamentary battleground from Tanjong to Bukit Bendera in this election where he faces BN's Chia Kwang Chye. He is also contesting the Kebun Bunga state seat against Teng.

Both the BN candidates are key men of Koh and Gerakan.

Apart from the two, Lim has also launched verbal assaults on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and other BN leaders, including Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Datuk Chua Jui Meng, Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu and Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik.

Teng, when explaining the issue raised by Lim, said the autopont flyover was used in several cities in other countries, and it was found to be effective in reducing traffic congestion.

He said studies showed that the project could help reduce congestion in Jalan Masjid Negeri by about 40 percent.

If it could be effective in other cities, there was no reason it would not work in Pulau Pinang, he said.

Jalan Masjid Negeri leads to Georgetown and the northeast of the

island, namely Tanjung Tokong, Tanjung Bungah, Batu Feringghi and Teluk Bahang, from the Penang Bridge and is among the congested roads during peak hours.

Teng said the MPPP was not only building the flyover in Jalan Masjid Negeri but was also widening and upgrading the road to cope with increasing traffic volume.

-- BERNAMA

SA YBY