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Gerakan to present more proof at BN meeting

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Gerakan, which is accusing Penang MCA chairman Wong Kam Hoong of instigating the action of the two errant Penang State Assemblymen, is preparing its case to be presented to the Barisan Nasional supreme council next month.

Secretary-general Chia Kwang Chye said today the party had no plans to reveal further "proof" of the instigation until then.

"Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said yesterday that any BN component party unhappy with the MCA's decision could refer the matter to the BN supreme council.

"We will adhere to his advice and wait until then," he said.

A Penang State Assemblyman said it was ridiculous for MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik to say he did not have a clue as to what the Penang Outer Ring Road project involved.

He said in 1980, a ring road around Georgetown was proposed and in 1987, a public exhibition and hearing was held where details of the PORR were explained to the public.

In 1995, he said a privatisation proposal of PORR was submitted to the Penang State Government, then to the Economic Planning Unit by Peninsular Metroworks Sdn Bhd (PMWSB), the concessionaire for the project, while from 1996-1997, numerous discussions on PORR alignments were held between the related Federal agencies and Penang State Exco members.

"Some time in August 1997, the EPU issued an offer letter for PORR to PMWSB and between 2000-2001, public exhibitions and hearings on the PORR alignment were shown in detail," said the assemblyman.

From December 2001 to February 2002, a public opinion poll on PORR's alignment and toll rates was conducted, from which over 85 per cent agreed, while on May 17, 2002, there was a BN precouncil meeting where the Penang Chief Minister asked all assemblymen if they had any queries or doubts on anything.

"No issues on the PORR were raised and from May 18 to 27, 2002 another public exhibition on the PORR was held," he said.

The assemblyman claimed that on June 22, this year, Wong called a closed-door meeting to form the "No to PORR" joint committee and on Oct 6, Wong with members of the committee and local residents prayed at a temple during the Kew Ong Yah (Nine Emperor Gods) festival to block the PORR project and pledged to go vegetarian for nine days.

On Oct 27, the Chief Minister met with more than 300 anti-PORR members and residents for more than five hours while on Nov 11, Wong had said that more than 90 per cent of MCA Penang assemblymen were against the PORR project and would vote by conscience.

"The irony of it all is that Lim Boo Chang (Datuk Keramat) and Tan Cheng Liang's (Jawi) constituencies are not even affected by the PORR project.

"The constituencies affected are Bukit Gelugor (Datuk Koay Kar Huah), Paya Terubong (Dr Loh Hock Hun), Air Itam (Lye Siew Weng) and Kebun Bunga (Datuk Dr Teng Hock Nan)," the assemblyman added.