

No state polls for Penang if PM calls GE today

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The Penang legislative assembly will not be dissolved even if Prime Minister Najib Razak announces the dissolution of Parliament today, as has been widely speculated by several news dailies.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng said Penang would not follow Najib's call as the federal budget was yet to be passed and proceedings in Parliament were continuing.

Lim, who is also DAP secretary-general, said he would only consider dissolving the state assembly if the general election was called next year.

The goodies offered by Najib in his recent budget announcement, he added, should be enjoyed by the people first, before the prime minister calls a snap election.

The last general election was called in 2008 and the next one is not due until 2013.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong dissolves Parliament on the advice of the prime minister, while state assemblies are dissolved on the advice of the chief minister or menteri besar.

"The goodies promised during elections must be dispersed before a fresh election is called," Lim said when met at the Teaching and Learning English in Asia Inaugural Conference in Penang.

He said Parliament should not be dissolved to allow for an early general election as the parliamentary select committee (PSC) on electoral reforms was yet to finish its job.

The PSC's public hearings will go on for two days from today, and about 200 parties have voiced their interest in testifying before the panel.

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