

Meet federal, state gov'ts on polls date, EC told
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has called on the Election Commission (EC) to bring the federal and state governments together to amicably decide on when the general election should be called.

Otherwise, it would seem like the EC's criticism of Pakatan Rakyat plans to call for state elections in Selangor and Penang as double standard, Lim, whom is also DAP secretary-general, said.

"The EC, if it wants to be an 'honest broker', should invite both federal and state representatives to come to the table," Lim said at a press conference in the lobby of Parliament today.

The Bagan MP was responding to EC chief Abdul Aziz Yusof's statement expressing intent to meet leaders of Pakatan Rakyat-run states to hold a general election concurrently, at federal and state levels.

Abdul Aziz's comments came after the Selangor and Penang governments, led by PKR and DAP respectively, said they may not dissolve their legislatures simultaneously with Parliament, should the 13th general election be called soon.

Abdul Aziz said he would meet the Pakatan leaders to explain to them the benefits of having the election at same time.

"Although the law allows the election for state and parliamentary seats to be held separately, the EC feels it is better to do it simultaneously to save cost, time and energy," Abdul Aziz had said.

Lim pointed out that the constitution guaranteed the right to call for an election to the federal government and the states.

He also retorted that if Sarawak, which held its state election in April, could do it separately, "why can't others?"

Lim said Abdul Aziz's comments were "specifically targeted" at Pakatan, for the EC had never interfered with the BN-controlled federal government's decisions on national polls.

"When you talk about the prerogative of the federal government, why not also respect the prerogative of the state?" he asked.

Nevertheless, if the EC should arrange for a meeting between BN and Pakatan, Lim said, Pakatan would be more than willing to discuss a convenient date.

"If you never discuss, you will never know the outcome," he replied when asked if Pakatan would agree to discuss simultaneous state and federal elections if the meeting was called.

"If the EC is not prejudiced and one-sided, then it should at least try (to arrange for a meeting)," he added.

Pakatan presidential council to meet MBs and CM

Meanwhile, PKR deputy president Azmin Ali said that the Pakatan presidential council will be inviting Lim and the three Pakatan menteri besar to discuss the matter and come to a consensus on the dissolution date.

The meeting will be conducted in the next few weeks after the PKR congress this weekend.

He said that Selangor MB Abdul Khalid Ibrahim's statement saying that Selangor will not dissolve the

state assembly alongside Parliament came without consultation with Pakatan.

“It is advisable that Abdul Khalid discuss this with the presidential council as this is a political matter,” he said, although asserting that he believes the MB will take the council’s views on board.

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