

Rumbles in Penang over new BN head

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By Susan Loone

A Penang-based Malay NGO is not happy that Gerakan secretary-general Teng Chang Yeow who is not a "pure (anak jati) Penangite" has been appointed as state BN chief.

NONE Penang Malay Congress president Rahmad Isahak (left) asked if the appointment could satisfy Chinese voters and whether Gerakan can be seen as a party that can come up with a transformation plan to regain support for the BN in the state.

"... perhaps the level of confidence of the prime minister in Penang Umno has resulted in the post being given to Gerakan," Rahmad told a press conference yesterday.

"(But) in fact, this is the best time for Umno to become the (state) opposition leader as it obtained 11 seats in the past general election."

azlan Gerakan - like the MCA and MIC - had been trounced in 2008 without winning a single seat, he noted in questioning the logic of the appointment.

Rahmad said that, given this development, the state Umno members could no longer "thump their chests and shout" that they are a party that upholds the Malay community's interests.

He said the community faces a dilemma, citing the Malay saying 'seperti ditelan mati emak dan di luah mati bapak'.

"This is why punishment needs to be meted out to relevant parties in the 13th general election," he said.

"Our views are sincere and rational ... as we take into account the political situation of the Malays in Penang. If this has to do with the social contract, the situation simply does not exist."

NONEThe NGO, which claims to speak for the large Malay community in Penang, has been vocal about the lack of Malay representation in the DAP and the effectiveness of Malay leadership in PKR.

Teng (left), a former Penang executive councillor and Padang Kota assemblyperson, was declared state BN chief on Sunday by BN head and premier Najib Abdul Razak.

The 47-year-old politician from Johor succeeded the Gerakan president and federal minister Koh Tsu Koon, who has decided not to contest the coming polls.

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