

Guan Eng declines to counter-attack Tunku Aziz
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Despite the personal attacks launched by former senator and DAP vice-chairperson Tunku Abdul Aziz Tunku Ibrahim, Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has chosen not to retaliate.

Lim, in a press statement, said that he had received Tunku's resignation letter from the DAP yesterday, and has attempted to contact the latter since he announced his departure on a programme on ntv7 on Monday, but failed.

"I do not wish to exchange personal attacks with Tunku but wish to put on record the party's appreciation for his contribution for the four years he has been the DAP's national vice-chief," he said.

"Let time decide who is on the side of truth," added the DAP secretary-general.

Lim (left) was responding to Tunku Aziz's interview with The Star, where the latter criticised him for having no sense of decency and being a different kettle of fish from his (Lim's) father Kit Siang.

Tunku Aziz, who has been a senator for Penang for a term, was not reappointed to his post when it expired on May 30.

He has told the media that he did not wish to be re-nominated after the party found his statement criticising the Bersih 3.0 protest on April 28 to be an embarrassment.

Meanwhile, Penang Institute chief executive officer Zairil Mohd Khir has expressed regret that his offer of a senior fellowship to Tunku Aziz had been "misconstrued".

Zairil Khir Johari (2)Zairil (right) said when it became clear that Tunku Aziz did not wish to be re-nominated for another term as a senator, the institute saw it as an opportunity to recruit a public intellectual with a valuable global network.

Zairil, who is political secretary to the chief minister, added that the post offered to Tunku Aziz comes with a standard package for senior fellowship that includes a yearly stipend of RM50,000.

So far, three persons have been appointed as senior fellows on this package, Zairil said.

'CM requested to convey institute's offer'

"Out of respect for Tunku Aziz's position as a senior figure, we requested the Penang chief minister, who is also the chairperson of Penang Institute, to convey our offer of a senior fellowship," he said.

"At no time did the chief minister speak about the terms of the appointment or any financial

details during their telephone conversation last Friday,” he added.

“The terms of the senior fellowship were only conveyed by me on Monday morning to Tunku Aziz when I followed-up on the chief minister’s call,” he stressed.

Zairil said as a think-tank, the job offered to Tunku Aziz entailed writing research papers and attending conferences overseas, denying that “travel” was a bait to persuade the latter to accept the job.

In The Star today, Tunku Aziz said Lim had contacted him on Sunday offering him the post and “dangled travel as an attraction” after his tenure as senator was not renewed.

He added that on Monday, Zairil called and repeated the offer, stating there was a stipend of RM50,000 provided with the job.

Tunku Aziz had felt that the offer was “totally insulting”, saying it had come from someone with no sense and modicum of respect.

“Did he think I was that kind of person? This man has no sense of decency. The only word is a Malay word, and it’s ‘biadap’,” the MCA-owned English daily quoted him as saying.

Meanwhile, Zairil expressed regret that the institute’s enthusiasm to have Tunku Aziz on board by requesting the chief minister to convey its offer has not only been misconstrued to justify his leaving the party, but also “used to malign” Lim.

He added that the offer was not meant to be compensation for his senatorship, but in fact a genuine offer based on a desire to make the best use of Tunku Aziz’s talent in the service of the state after his retirement as a senator.