

Guan Eng chided for not revealing PM's free port reply
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By Susan Loone

Penang BN publicity chief Tan Cheng Liang is adamant that the DAP is covering up part of Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's written reply in Parliament on the island's free port status.

Why, Tan asked at a press conference yesterday, has Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, who obtained the reply on June 19, not revealed the details of Najib's written reply.

To a written question from Lim, Najib had said the federal government was considering restoring Penang's free port status, which is now a hot topic among politicians in the state.

Tan is angry that DAP parliamentarians Liew Chin Tong (Bukit Bendera) and Chong Eng (Bukit Mertajam) had, despite Najib's reply, told a press conference on June 27 that the free port concept does not exist.

However, she said, Najib in his reply to Lim said he was considering the restoration of Penang's free port status, which was taken away in 1969, and she asked why the DAP did not state this in the June 27 press conference.

'Attempt to mislead the people'

Tan, who is also Penang MCA wanita chief, described the action of the DAP leaders as an attempt to "mislead the people" on the free port, especially since the state BN has pledged to give Penang back its free port status if the people vote it back into power.

"Why is it that up to now, Lim refuses to reveal Najib's parliament answer dated June 19?" Tan queried.

"I stand by my statement. The Pakatan lawmakers selectively revealed what benefited them and covered up that which were disadvantageous to them on the issue of free port," she added.

"I will not apologise (for saying the MPs twisted the issue). Instead, they should apologise for it, not to me but to the people of Penang," she insisted.

State DAP chief Chow Kon Yeow had on Monday criticised Tan for her remarks, saying it was a serious allegation to say his party colleagues had twisted the reply from the Finance Ministry that was issued on June 12.

Chow urged Tan to apologise and retract her statement, saying she should read the parliamentary replies by the Finance Ministry before making her comments as it was tantamount to saying the MPs were "in contempt" of Parliament.