

Penang PKR names five new MPPP councillors

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By Susan Loone

The Penang PKR has replaced five of its eight councillors in the Penang Municipal Council (MPPP), setting the stage for unhappiness among some of those dropped.

NONEHowever, Deputy Chief Minister I Rashid Hasnon said his approach will be to remind those dropped that they have already held their posts for three years.

"Those who already have had that much experience should give new faces a chance," Rashid said when contacted.

"I've ... told them that they should venture into some other sector, (such as) business or development, in which they have gained experience while in the local council.

"My approach has always been proactive, to anticipate what will happen and tackle arising issues early ... and that is why I have spoken to the newbies to learn the ropes now, unlike (those of) us (who only started) to read (the bylaws) after (the) swearing in."

PKR dropped Ooi Keat Hin, Ramlah Asiahoo, Tan Seng Kiat, Mohd Taufik Sulong and Ng Chek Siang and retained only Francis Joseph and Muhammad Sabri Md Osman.

Another vacancy, left by Rashid when he was appointed DCM 1, is yet to be filled.

The newly-appointed PKR councillors are Ahmad Azrizal Tahir, Nurall Ramakrishnan, Tan Chiew Choen, Muhammad Bakhtiar Wan Chik and Lim Boon Beng.

Muhadmmad Bakhtiar was PKR candidate in Balik Pulau but lost to Umno's Hilmi Yahya in the May 5 polls.

Rashid also said PKR's appointees must carry out their tasks so that the party's visibility improves.

At the same time, the party must be "more aggressive" when monitoring the councillors and representatives of NGOs affiliated to PKR.

"The performance must be monitored. We must be more united to ensure that programmes are carried out (effectively) to make PKR more visible in Penang," he

said.

"We have internal issues but this is normal (in any party) but we must have a concerted effort to get the programmes running."

NONE On Saturday, Chow Kon Yeow (right), who heads the local government, traffic management and flood mitigation committee, announced the new line up.

The DAP had 10 posts, PAS two and NGOs four.

Lim Mah Hui, known for his bold remarks against the state government especially over environmental issue, was surprisingly retained for another term.

Public 'not consulted' on appointments

Penang-based NGO Chant Awareness has since questioned why the public was not consulted about the new appointments.

"In the interest of the CAT (competency, accountability and transparency) policies, we demand that the names and qualification, profession, assets and affiliations of all local councillors be published," it said in a statement.

"In the (public) interest, why not hold local elections for councillors? The selected parties can (then) be appointed as per normal procedures.

"Penangites must be informed that these councillors are very powerful, they decide on planning issue within MPPP, they vote at the Special Planning Committee.

"If they don't object to stupid planning guidelines, like increasing (the population) density, all these councillors will vote 'yes' and we will all be in trouble/"

Seberang Perai municipal councillors will be sworn in today, while those for MPPP will take their oath on July 8.

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