

Penang Gerakan figures out opposition role

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By Susan Loone

Penang Gerakan, which failed to win any seat in the May 5 general election, is mulling other ways to play the role of opposition in the state legislative assembly.

dr teng hock nan interview 241108 02State party chief Dr Teng Hock Nan said it is likely that a representative would be sent to the sittings, which begin today and continue up to Friday.

However, he said the party will not hold daily press conferences "just for the sake of holding them", but only if there are important and necessary issues to raise..

On how the party plans to coordinate with the 10 Umno assemblypersons in the state legislature, Teng said: "Everyone (in the BN) is focusing on party elections, so let's talk about it after that.

"Anyway, we have always been playing our role as opposition through the party mechanism."

Asked if Gerakan will reappoint coordinators for constituencies won by Pakatan Rakyat, he said this is up to the Prime Minister's Department to decide.

The BN coordinators had resigned to contest in the 13th general election.

"I am not aware of any new development in the area. Penang Gerakan has never discussed about this or submitted names for the list," he added.

NONEYesterday, the Penang government had appointed 10 coordinators (right) in constituencies won by the BN, because these elected representatives have refused to work with the state administration.

The coordinators are paid a monthly allowance of RM2,500 and provided with an office and an assistant.

State Gerakan Youth chief Oh Tong Keong said the party has yet to discuss sending a representative to the state legislative proceedings.

"I will let our Youth wing members decide if they want to sit in. They are free to do so if they wish, there is no harm in wanting to do so.

"We encourage the young members to sit in and if they find any state policies that go against the people's interests, like hill slope development, they can raise the issue although we do not want them to simply shoot (criticise)."

Gerakan coordinators by end of year

Oh also said that the party's coordinators should be appointed by the new leadership and that the list will likely be ready at the end of the year.

NONEPenang Gerakan is currently holding branch and division level polls.

"Even if we want to appoint coordinators, we would have to leave it to the new leadership to decide," Oh (right) noted.

He agreed that coordinators should be provided an allowance so that they do not have to spend their money in providing services to the people.

"But Gerakan is a party that is willing to provide services with or without returns. Although we have ceased operation of the coordinators' service centres, the headquarters in Jalan Macalister is open as usual."

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