

Perkasa backs Guan Eng on Penang cooks
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has found an unlikely ally in his bid to do away with foreign cooks at hawker stalls serving local food – Malay right-wing group Perkasa is voicing its support for him on this move.

This comes a day after Tourism Minister Nazri Abdul Aziz also backed Lim and poured scorn on the state MCA for opposing Lim's proposal.

"Perkasa supports the policy that that foreigners should not be cooking Penang food.

"I support what is done by the chief minister and Nazri," Perkasa president Ibrahim Ali (right) told Malaysiakini.

However, Ibrahim stressed that his endorsement of Lim's effort is not the same as supporting DAP, of which Perkasa has been fiercely critical.

"This does not mean that we are supporting DAP, but that we support good policies.

"Perkasa will support anything that is good, based on the principles of our constitution, culture and religion," Ibrahim said.

As such, Ibrahim said it was wrong to say Perkasa is racist and backward.

Ibrahim said the policy proposed by Lim should be extended nationwide.

'We have our own cooks'

He said this is because the country has many cooks who are trained locally.

"Many students take courses in culinary at universities and local colleges. We can train them.

"Why do we need to take outsiders?" he asked.

Nazri in a scathing attack yesterday said he did not care about the MCA's views as it was "irrelevant", adding that the party could not represent anyone as it lost all its seats in Penang during the last general election.

He was responding to MCA's criticism of him for supporting Lim's stance on foreign cooks.

However, MCA religious harmony bureau chairperson Ti Lian Ker today said Nazri's comments were unbecoming against a coalition ally, adding that the party was only voicing out hawkers' concerns.

Lim has said the ban on foreigner cooks will only apply to hawker stalls, but restaurants and hotels will be free to hire cooks of their choice.

Aside from MCA, other notable figures such as top chef Redzuawan Ismail, better known as Chef Wan, and film maker Amir Muhammad have also criticised Lim for the proposal.

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