

**Lim: No need for Gurkhas as bodyguards**  
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Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has dismissed a call for him to hire Gurkhas as bodyguards if he had no confidence in the police force.

Gurkha soldiers were originally Nepali citizens who were brought into Malaya 57 years ago as part of the British army.

Lim Guan Eng, seen meeting Japan Consul General and Denmark Ambassador (centre in photo) said he is uncertain as to why Umno has raised the matter when he does not have a problem with the bodyguards assigned to him.

"Umno has no political capital, it has lost its roots. Even when something is not there, it says it is there," he told a press conference in Penang today, after presenting medals and cash to 47 municipal council workers for good performance.

"They seem to be good at detecting 'ghosts' because their hearts are full of evil; they also have many 'ghosts' in their membership lists."

He was responding to a statement by Bukit Mertajam Umno chief Musa Sheikh Fadzir yesterday that Lim should hire Gurkhas instead of police personnel as bodyguards since he is highly critical of the force.

Musa's comment reportedly drew loud applause at the party's division meeting in Bukit Mertajam yesterday.

Criticism 'to continue'

Lim, who is DAP secretary-general, admitted he has been critical of inspector-general of police (IGP) Musa Hassan (right), but clarified that the criticism does not extend to the entire police force.

"We are critical of those who have failed in their duties. It is open criticism of which the IGP himself is aware," said Lim.

"It is true, we are protected by the Malaysian police but don't forget they are also paid from taxpayers' money."

Lim questioned why Umno has not supported an increase in salary for police personnel, so that it is on par with that of their Singaporean counterparts.

He said the force would be able to wipe out corruption if the salary of its personnel is good enough.

Lim maintained that he will continue to criticise police officers if they play politics and heed the orders of Umno leaders rather than act professionally in carrying out their duties.

"If the police want to play politics, then I suggest the IGP should resign and stand for elections," he said.

Penang BN leader and state Umno secretary Azhar Ibrahim has previously ticked off Lim for

his negative comments about the police.

Azhar also went a step further to suggest that the army should take over the state if Lim has lost confidence in the ability of the police to protect Penang.

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