

**New list of Selangor councillors out
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The Selangor state government has already issued its new list of councillor appointments and expects them to be sworn in by their respective local councils by Wednesday at the latest, said Menteri Besar Khalid Ibrahim.

He said that it is not the state's intention to reduce the 25 percent quota for NGOs and professionals on local councils, but stressed that there have been quite a few teething problems in maintaining the quota.

save tian chua dinner 200610 khalid ibrahim 02Khalid (left) acknowledged the contributions made by NGOs and professionals on the local councils, but pointed out that there has been a lot of "misunderstanding and mistrust" between them and political appointees.

"There are always public discussions on the differences in views, which we thought would be best handled in a private discussion before we go public on these decisions and opinions," he said at a press conference at the state assembly.

"Debating in public, just like in our political experience, will hinder the progress of the activities we are doing."

Earlier, two NGO coalitions had demanded that the Selangor government live up to its principles and uphold the 25 percent quota for NGOs and professional representation on local councils.

The Coalition for Good Governance (CGG) and Coalition of NGO and Professional Appointed Councillors (Conpac) claim that the state government has back-tracked on its election promise of transparency and engagement with civil society.

CGG chair Jeffrey Phang said the state executive council's refusal to allow CGG to vet the latest list of councillor appointments was akin to cutting the public out of the decision-making process.

"This current issue of the appointment of local councillors is a watershed of the state's commitment towards local council elections," he said at a press conference after presenting a memorandum to Khalid.

"It will be plain for the public to now judge the credibility of the state government by the steps they will take to resolve this issue."

Conpac chair Tan Jo Hann called on Khalid and state exco member for Local Government Ronnie Liu to arrange for an immediate meeting to discuss the lack of uniformity among local councils in upholding the quota.

"Although the Selangor government had clearly announced the 25 percent quota for NGOs and professional candidates, in reality the present list of appointments is a far cry from the promise," he said.

