

Gov't chief sec defends Penang SDO

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Chief Secretary to the Government Mohd Sidek Hassan today defended Penang State Development Officer Nik Ali Mat Yunus and described the allegations by Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng against Nik Ali as excessive and should not have been made in the open.

NONEMohd Sidek (right), who is also the cabinet secretary, said the cabinet at its meeting today took a serious view on Lim's statement against Nik Ali particularly on the issue over illegal sand mining in Balik Pulau, demolition of the arches at the Penang Botanical Garden and the allegation that no seat was provided for the Penang Chief Minister during the launch of the Penang Hill Railway.

"These three issues, for which Nik Ali was blamed by the Penang chief minister, were not under the jurisdiction of the officer as the state development officer," Mohd Sidek said in his brief statement today.

NONEHe said the Penang chief minister should follow the correct procedure by channelling complaints on these issues to the relevant department/agency.

Previous press reports stated that the rift between Lim and Nik Ali emerged when the chief minister was alleged to have made several statements criticising the officer.

Among other things, Lim had labelled Nik Ali (left) as "incompetent, useless, unprofessional and a coward" and that he should be sacked with regard to the issue on the illegal sand mining in Balik Pulau.

- Bernama

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