



Koh: Keng Yaik quit out of 'misunderstanding'
Malaysiakini.com
October 5, 2010

Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon today attempted to douse flames caused by scorching criticism from his predecessor Dr Lim Keng Yaik. In a statement today, Koh said Lim's resignation as party adviser and harsh words Lim used on his leadership likely resulted from a "misunderstanding".

Koh said Lim had given him the impression that the current leadership had been given full endorsement to deal with the Penang party crisis in whatever way it saw fit.

This was why Koh did not seek further advice on the matter from the party's adviser.

Penang Gerakan is facing a crisis as an extraordinary general meeting is being convened on Sunday, with the sole objective of ousting its state chief Dr Teng Hock Nan.

"Although Lim and I had talked about the Penang situation before, he indicated he would leave it to me and the present leadership to seek a solution.

"Hence, I had not contacted him directly after the EGM move came into the open on Sept 15. This might have led to some misunderstanding," said Koh.

'I've been monitoring Penang situation'

He also rejected Lim's claims that he had not been proactive in resolving the Penang conflict.

He said he had been actively monitoring, and exploring possible solutions, to the matter and had been in contact with several key leaders, directly as well as indirectly.

Koh also maintained that he had repeatedly emphasised that the conflict should have been resolved through other means and that the EGM ought to be avoided.

"However, if those who had signed the EGM petition insist on their democratic rights, then the democratic process has to go on smoothly.

"But all must accept the outcome and close ranks, as I have openly pleaded at the party's Penang state delegates conference on Sept 26," he said.

Koh said his efforts to resolve the conflict had taken time and his main objective was to preserve party solidarity and look out for the dignity of key party leaders.

"It is my fervent hope that with or without the EGM, our leaders in Penang will come together quickly and focus on serving the people and the party," he said.

Keng Yaik's quit letter received

Koh also confirmed that he received Lim's resignation letter at 4pm yesterday.

In the meantime, Koh said, he would be consulting fellow central working committee members on the latest development and called on party members to remain calm.

In a surprise move yesterday, Lim announced his resignation as party adviser over disappointment with Koh's handling of party matters, particularly the Penang crisis.



"My heart is bleeding," said Lim, in reference to his feelings about the condition of the party today.

Among others, Lim described Koh as not pro-active in resolving party problems, akin to the proverbial ostrich that buries its head in the sand.

But the last straw for Lim came when he read in newspapers that Koh would attend the MCA annual general assembly in Kuala Lumpur, instead of the EGM in Penang, which falls on the same date.

A group of Penang Gerakan grassroots members successfully obtained enough endorsements from party delegates last month to convene the EGM.

They want to oust Teng (*above*), whom they claim is a bad leader.

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