

Lim apologises, DAP reps to attend ceremony
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The crisis which developed yesterday over the appointment of a PAS menteri besar in a DAP-led Perak state assembly seemed to have been resolved today. MCPX

DAP stalwart Lim Kit Siang who rejected the appointment of a PAS candidate today apologised for any offence caused to the Perak royalty over his statement.

"My three-paragraph statement at 7pm last night that the DAP central executive committee emergency meeting on March 9 had not given approval for a PAS menteri besar to head a Perak coalition state government was not made out of disrespect to the Perak sultan and regent, both whom I have always held in the highest regard and I apologise for any offence caused," he said.

"The statement was on the party position at the time. There have been further discussions and developments on the matter in the hours after the statement. Announcements of the latest position will be made."

This was immediately followed by state DAP chairperson and Sitiawan state assemblyperson Ngeh Khoo Ham who told Malaysiakini that whatever misunderstanding that occurred over the matter has been clarified.

He also said that all DAP elected representatives will attend the swearing in ceremony before the Sultan of Perak in Kuala Kangsar today at 4pm.

"The new coalition government stands united and has agreed to a collective leadership form of governance. All policy decisions of the new government will only be implemented after the executive councillors of the state have approved them."

However, in yet another twist, PKR today issued a statement threatening to pull out from the coalition government on hearing that eight of the 10 executive council posts will go to DAP while the remaining two going to other parties.

perak cm mb mohamad nizar jamaluddinYesterday, just hours after the Regent of Perak agreed to the appointment of Pasir Panjang state assemblyperson and Perak PAS secretary Mohamad Nizar Jamaludin as the menteri besar, DAP leader Lim Kit Siang threw a spanner in the works, stating that his party had not approved to the appointment.

Lim said that the party had only agreed to the appointment of a menteri besar from either the DAP or the PKR.

He also said that all 18 DAP state representatives would stay away from the swearing-in ceremony for Perak menteri besar scheduled tomorrow.

Ngeh and PKR's Behrang assemblyperson Jamaluddin Mohd Radzi were the other two candidates who were in the running for the menteri besar post.

Palace released letter

Yesterday, after meeting the regent, Nizar, Ngeh and Jamaluddin told reporters that the regent had agreed with the appointment of Nizar as the menteri besar and that Ngeh would be the deputy menteri besar (1) and an Indian candidate from PKR to be the second deputy menteri besar.

perak state seat breakdownLate last night, soon after Lim's statement was released, the Perak palace released the letter which stated that all three parties, including the DAP, had agreed to the decision of Sultan Azlan Shah.

According to the letter, the three candidates had unanimously agreed to abide to the sultan's choice.

The DAP's reversal today comes as a welcome relief to some who were worried that Lim's stand would cause severe rift among the opposition not just in Perak but nationwide.

Of a total of 59 state seats, DAP controls 18 seats while PKR has seven and PAS six, making a total of 31. The remaining 28 are in the hands of BN.

National interest above all

Meanwhile, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said in Penang today that his party will place priority on national interest and the Perak royalty in handling the controversy.

The new Penang chief minister also pointed out that he has issued a directive to all Perak elected representatives to attend the swearing-in ceremony this afternoon.

"I have decided as the DAP secretary-general that we should deal with party internal matters on a different platform. I want to look at the larger question - the national interest and secondly, to ensure our respect and loyalty to the Perak Sultan," he told a press conference.

Guan Eng said this when asked to comment on his father's strongly-worded statement yesterday opposing the appointment of Nizar. He was met by reporters at the Dewan Sri Pinang after witnessing the swearing in ceremony of 10 state exco members this morning.

When asked if the DAP accepted Nizar's appointment, Guan Eng merely said he has asked all the party's elected representatives to attend the swearing-in ceremony.