

Guan Eng : these are not populist policies
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Beh Lih Yi

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has said his two major announcements after taking office and which won accolades from the people were not meant to be populist policies.
MCPX

This include his move to waive all summonses involving hawker licences and parking fees before the general election, as well as to appoint a Malay and an Indian as his deputies.

"If I want to make populist moves, I will cancel many more things, not just traffic summonses," he said in Penang today when asked to comment on whether he is running the state government as a populist government.

Elaborating on the decision, he said there have been a lot of complaints on how the summonses were issued and policies which were not carried out in a transparent manner.

"We want a fresh start since this is a new government that is a complete departure from the previous government. So let's have a fresh start from March 11," he added, referring to the day that he was sworn in as the fourth chief minister of Penang.

While the move to waive the summonses was well-received by Penangites, critics had said this may not be an appropriate as it is done at the expense of the government's coffer. Lim was uncertain about the exact figure when asked earlier.

lim guan eng and penang deputy cm p ramasamy and mohd fairus khairuddin 120308 happy
Asked on the same subject today, the CM replied: "We have an estimate of the cost, we will work it out (but remember) all these collections you don't get in full. We are trying to get a final amount."

Lim has also named its ally PKR's Mohammad Fairus Khairuddin and DAP's P Ramasamy as the DCM (I) and (II) respectively to show his government represents all communities.

The move was hailed by many parties as it was the first time an Indian has been appointed to such a high post, in the wake of grouses that the Indian community has long been marginalised.

The appointment of Mohammad Fairus as DCM (1) in the state is also seen as a move to pacify anxiety among the Malays in Penang, a minority group, that they will be sidelined by the predominantly Chinese DAP.

State exco line-up unveiled

Lim was met by reporters after witnessing 10 state executive councillors, including his two deputies, sworn in this morning at the Dewan Sri Pinang on the island. (See chart below)

The state exco line-up comprises seven representatives from the DAP and three from PKR.

They are DAP's Chow Kon Yeow (Padang Kota), Wong Hon Wai (Air Itam), Lim Hock Seng

(Bagan Jermal), Ong Kok Fook (Berapit), Phee Boon Poh (Sungai Puyu), Law Heng Kiang (Batu Lanchang), PKR's Law Choo Kiang (Bukit Tambun) and Abdul Malik Abul Kassim (Batu Maung).

On the line-up, the CM disagreed that the prominent portfolios - such as economic planning, local government and international trade - were all allocated to DAP representatives.

"I don't think so, I think the portfolios are well distributed. It didn't go to any particular party and (it was finalised) after discussion with PKR. I will reject that sort of analysis," he said.

"This is a government for all and I will have regular discussion with my two deputies," he added.

Penang PKR chief Zahrain Mohamed Hashim when asked on the same issue said he was of the view that the portfolios given to the party's state representatives were "proportionate".

"I think the portfolios are very relevant to us and I have got the assurance from Guan Eng that I am free to discuss with him at anytime (on state's matters)," he told reporters when met at the sidelines of the ceremony.

Other PKR representatives felt that the PKR and DAP will work together for the betterment of Penangites regardless of the posts given.

"Nobody is not important. Whatever the arrangement is, we shall cooperate with each other," said PKR's Kebun Bunga state assemblyperson Jason Ong.

Bukit Tambun's Law conceded he was surprised at first when he was told of the portfolio given to him as he was more familiar in the areas of education and business.

"But every portfolio is equally important," he stressed.

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