

**Penang CM unperturbed by uproar over Lee's appointment**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**Apr 24, 2008**  
**Soon Li Tsin**

Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng does not want to go into details as to why he appointed former Gerakan deputy secretary-general Lee Kah Choon as this was 'not the right time'.  
MCPX

Reiterating his stand several times at a press conference at the DAP headquarters in Petaling Jaya today, Lim said there are larger issues to address.

lee kah choon and lim guan eng 230408"The whole process involved discussion with Lee [...] these details should be left private. I don't want to go into details, maybe at a suitable time I will but for now there are larger issues (to deal with)," he told reporters.

The DAP secretary-general admitted that he had not anticipated any controversy in offering Lee a director post in the state's investment agencies - Penang Development Corporation (PDC) and InvestPenang.

"I did not expect my efforts to have such a far reaching impact until it became headline news for a few days. It was just beyond my expectations that this gesture would be opposed in such strong terms and invite such strong assumptions," he noted.

### **Lee under fire**

Lee faced a barrage of criticisms when he decided to take up Lim's offer on Monday including from Barisan Nasional chairperson Abdullah Ahmad Badawi who said Lee's decision was "against the spirit of BN."

Former Gerakan president Dr Lim Keng Yaik also offered his "pity" because Lee will have to face distrust from the party and DAP.

Also, Gerakan Wanita head Tan Lian Hoe opined that he should resign and that the party will not break up if Lee's membership was withdrawn.

The last straw for Lee was when Gerakan acting president Dr Koh Tsu Koon issued a show-cause letter asking him to explain why no action should be taken against him for taking up the opposition job offer.

Koh also said Lee only has experience as a lawyer and a parliamentary secretary with the Health Ministry - both unrelated to investment in the industrial sector.

Resulting from this, Lee submitted a letter yesterday to withdraw his party membership and rebutted the criticisms over his inexperience with investments.

### **Behaving like sour grapes**

Meanwhile, Lim accused BN leaders of acting like sour grapes by objecting to Lee's decision to take up the appointments.

"I think with that kind of attacks, (they are acting) like sour grapes. When we try to reach out they will say you are going after their people and yet Koh contradicts himself for saying Lee is unsuitable.

"Did Koh have any experience in business when he became Penang CM? If you look it, he had no corporate experience and he was only an academic," he said.

The DAP leader then stated that Lee was never asked to leave his party and join either DAP or PKR .

He also said Lee has not been paid for his job and is just serving the Penang state government for now.

Lim added that he will continue to welcome people who share similar philosophy with the state government regardless of race, religion or political affiliations.

"The Penang state wishes to welcome all Malaysians who subscribe to CAT - competency, accountability and transparency - philosophy.

"We want to show that after the campaign is over, we want to reach out away from this political partisanship and get down to work.

"We see no harm in reaching out across the political divide and extending our hand to work together, why should it be criticised and condemned in such strong terms by national leaders?" he said.

### **Meeting this weekend**

Lim then announced that he will be meeting with all DAP parliamentarians this weekend to make the CAT concept a part of the party's philosophy in governance.

Lee, 48, who joined Gerakan in 1987, defeated DAP's Karpal Singh for the Jelutong parliamentary seat in 1999 and retained the seat in 2004.

In the March 8 polls, he was also speculated to succeed Koh as chief minister alongside party vice-president Dr Teng Hock Nan and Tanjung division chief Teng Chang Yeow.

However, he lost the Machang Bubok state seat to PKR's Tan Hock Leong and subsequently resigned from all his political posts.

Gerakan also lost Penang when DAP clinched 19 of the 40 state seats and became the earliest state known to have fallen into opposition hands.