

Quit and butt out, Gerakan ex-boss told
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Former Gerakan president Dr Lim Keng Yaik should quit his position as advisor and stop interfering in party matters, said seven leaders in the Federal Territories.
MCPX

In a joint statement, they referred in particular to his attack on former protégé Lee Kah Choon for accepting two posts offered by the DAP-led Pakatan Rakyat Penang government. Earlier, though, he had expressed disappointment, but wished Lee "the best of luck."

ft gerakan pc 290408 leaders However, the group of seven accused Lim of "forcing the hand of the party leadership" in issuing a show-cause letter to Lee over the appointments, which prompted the latter to quit the party on April 23.

"We regret that a capable leader has been forced out of the party as a result of the action by Keng Yaik," said the seven, mainly comprising branch and division chairpersons.

They also claimed that Lim has made several statements over the past few months that have damaged the party's image.

The seven comprise FT head Dr Tan Kee Kwong and division chairpersons Siow Chee Meng (Bukit Bintang), Dr Hsu Dar Ren (Cheras) and KK Supramaniam (Lembah Pantai), as well as Gan Kok Keng, Eddie Yaw and Li Tiam Chai.

Lee, the former Jelutong parliamentarian was touted as a candidate for the Penang chief minister's post prior to the March 8 polls. After Gerakan's rout in the state, he quit all party posts on March 31, including that of deputy secretary-general, to take responsibility.

lee kah choon and lim guan eng penang He has been working with the Penang Development Corporation and InvestPenang since April 18, after accepting the offer by Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng (right in photo).

The group said that, based on the polls results, Gerakan must put aside ideological differences and be prepared to "work hand in hand" with the opposition for the sake of the people.

"In this context, we view Lee's acceptance of the (two posts) as something beneficial to the people of Penang. These appointments are non-political and his work would be no different from that of a civil servant.

"We note that Lee was an ordinary Gerakan member at the time of his acceptance of these positions. Hence, his acceptance of these positions would not jeopardise the party's interests."

'Keep promise'

At a press conference in Kuala Lumpur this morning, Tan - who acted as spokesperson for the seven - said Lim's latest outburst was a sign that he had reneged on his promise not to interfere in party affairs.

ft gerakan pc 290408 tan kee kwong "These are his exact words: 'I don't want to be another (ex-premier Dr) Mahathir (Mohamad). When I step down I will shut up, unless I'm asked for my comments'," Tan noted.

Stressing that his views do not represent FT Gerakan, Tan gave examples of remarks that Lim has made to the alleged detriment of the party's image.

These included a pre-election statement that the new Penang chief minister should be one of three named candidates - whom he described as "horses" - who obtained the highest majority in the polls.

"When I read that, I almost fainted. How would Penang people feel? People were more worried about economic issues and he was talking about the chief minister's post. So the people of Penang threw the whole lot out, including the three horses," said Tan.

gerakan pc 210408 lim keng yik 3 "My advice to Keng Yaik (photo) is, as an experienced leader, you can talk about inflation, Islamic state and other national issues, but please don't comment on party matters."

On a separate matter, Tan announced that he would not defend his post as Segambut division chief and Federal Territories head.

He was non-committal when asked if he would contest any post at the national-level party elections, due by year's end.

Pressed by reporters, Tan said he has received many suggestions by members to go for broke and contest the presidency.

Dr Koh Tsu Koon, who lost to DAP's P Ramasamy in the Batu Kawan parliamentary seat in the general election, has been acting president since last April when he took over from Lim.

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