

Keng Yaik ends 26-year tenure as Gerakan chief

The Star - 9/4/2007

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KUALA LUMPUR: Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik has ended his 26-year tenure as Gerakan president.

Yesterday, he officially passed over the baton to Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, who will become acting party president.

Famous for his witty remarks, Dr Lim "caused a stir" after secretary-general Datuk Seri Chia Kwang Chye tabled three resolutions: for Dr Lim to retire as president, his appointment as national adviser and for Dr Koh to take over.

As he took the podium to deliver his farewell address at the extraordinary national delegates conference, Dr Lim told Chia: "Even before I step down (as president), you are saying this and that in the resolution. What if I don't want to retire?"

"Wait until I step down, then you say," he added.

Looking at conference speaker Datuk Dr Chin Fook Weng, Dr Lim asked: "You also can't wait to see me go?"

Then he told the delegates that it was his way, where he could approach things in a light manner with party leaders.

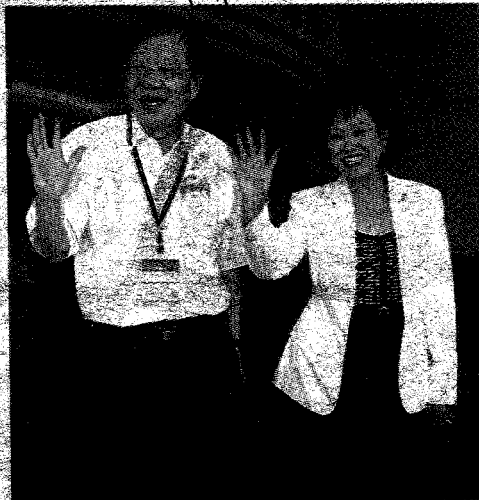
Although Dr Lim had pledged the handing over of his presidency would be a happy affair as he was celebrating his 68th birthday, it turned out to be a little emotional for him.

He was seen wiping his eyes, when Perak delegate Ong Kah Khoon described the beginnings of their struggle when he debated the three resolutions.

Dr Lim, who will continue as Energy, Water and Communications Minister, admitted he cried a little bit.

"I may be strong but I am still human and I have feelings," he said.

All three resolutions were passed by the delegates.



Goodbye: Dr Lim and his wife Datin Seri Wong Yoon Chuan bidding farewell as they leave Menara PGRM yesterday.

After his retirement as president, Dr Lim said he would volunteer his service to travel around the country to remind the grassroots of the party's struggles and principles.

"I told the president (Dr Koh) and the CC (central committee) that I'd like to go around the country to remind the grassroots about the political struggle of Gerakan - its ideology and non-racial approach," Dr Lim said.

He pointed out that the move would not be to criticise the party leadership but to train members in Gerakan's struggles.

"I will advise when the party asks for it, whether in the CC or privately. Who am I to dictate to the party?" he said.

Earlier, a closed-door briefing was held for the delegates. Dr Lim said the party had nothing to hide and the closed-door briefing was at the request of Dr Koh and the central committee, who wanted him to give his last advice.