

Lim to be offered adviser's job

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KUALA LUMPUR: Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik will be offered the party's national adviser post to acknowledge his contribution to the party after his retirement on Sunday.

Announcing this yesterday, deputy president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, who will be the acting president after the party's extraordinary national delegates conference on Sunday, said he would propose to the delegates to pass a resolution on Lim's appointment.

Asked whether Lim's charisma and strong personality would interfere with his running of the party, Koh said: "It would not be an interference but a positive input. We would expect him to speak his mind openly and kindly, but I do not expect him to be confrontational."

"He loves the party too much and I am sure he would give his views, including criticisms, through the communication channels that we have."

Koh said he would not appoint a deputy for now, and that he would leave it to the delegates at the party's assembly in 2008 to decide on who that person should be.

He said he planned to continue as the Penang chief minister and a decision whether he would move to the federal government will be made before the next general election.

Asked to state his personal preference, Koh said "there are several options and possibilities, which you are welcomed to speculate".

He said the first task he would perform as the acting president would be to convene a central committee meeting to reinforce the party's commitment.

He would also be meeting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi to inform him of the party's plans.

Koh paid tribute to Lim for guiding him in Koh's 25-year political career, acting as mentor and friend.

On whether the party's administration would be influenced by Lim's leadership style, Koh acknowledged that most of the leaders and members were influenced by Lim's philosophy, vision and leadership style.

"To me, it is something good as it showed the continuity of the party's unity, but one thing is for sure, I am not 100% like him (Lim). I am sure there will be changes in terms of approaches, leadership style and strategies," Koh said.

On detractors who said he was too nice an intellectual to lead a political party, Koh said:

"A nice person can also be very firm when the time comes, and there were occasions when I had to make a fast and firm decision."

On Lim's advice that the deputy president should be someone from Perak since Koh is from Penang, Koh said he did not think there was a die-cast formula.