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Pak Lah warns Guan Eng

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'Don't say things that can stoke racial tensions'

PUTRAJAYA: Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng was warned by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi not to make statements that could stoke racial tensions.

Lim, after his swearing in as the new Penang Chief Minister on Tuesday, told reporters that the DAP-led state government would not practise the New Economic Policy (NEP).

Lim had also said that the NEP, which was introduced in 1971 after

the May 13, 1969, racial riots to eradicate poverty and restructure society, was the source of "cronyism, corruption and inefficiency."

Abdullah told Bernama in between meetings with top civil servants at his office here that the NEP had in fact benefited everyone.

"I would like to ask the DAP which

community has been made poorer because of the NEP," he said.

"The (Penang) state government must not try to create an atmosphere which can cause racial tensions," warned Abdullah, who is also head of Penang Umno.

He also said that the new state government in Penang should not

marginalise the Malays, who are the minority in the state, and other minority groups like the Indians.

"Do not marginalise the Malays. I want to ask Lim Guan Eng what his plans are for the Malays in Penang. What are his plans for the Indians in Penang? What are his plans for other minority groups in Penang?"

The prime minister gave an assurance that the federal Government would continue to look after the lower-income groups in the state and would also continue with the special assistance programmes for the bumiputras. — Bernama