

Tsu Koon hits out at Utusan over Penang BN row
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By Debra Chong

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 25 — Gerakan president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon has rapped Umno's Utusan Malaysia's Datuk Zaini Hassan for sticking his nose into Penang Barisan Nasional's (BN) political affairs.

The Penang BN chief appeared chagrined by a remark made yesterday by the Malay daily's assistant editor in calling for lynchpin party Umno to take over and helm the state opposition coalition.

"Why should I respond to someone who doesn't understand Penang?" the minister in the Prime Minister's Department retorted last night when asked for comment.

"He should find out first, talk to Umno leaders in Penang first and BN leaders in Penang in general," Koh (picture) said.

"Ouch!" he said, in a flat, mocking tone directed at the newsman.

In his column published yesterday, Zaini had mocked the former Penang chief minister, and urged Gerakan to stop raising a fuss against the ruling Pakatan Rakyat (PR) state leadership.

The Malay columnist said: "If all parties agree for Umno to be the next chief minister after the coming general election, I am convinced Penang can be successfully wrested back."

He also reminded Koh that the current seat allotment in Penang's legislative assembly showed Umno to be the only BN party to survive Election 2008 intact.

He pointed out that Gerakan, which has been at the island state's forefront for nearly 30 years since joining the BN coalition in 1973, had zero representation in the Penang assembly.

Zaini is among the latest mainstream media staffers to criticise Koh.

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