

Minister says Penang CM should consult federal panel over local elections plan
The Malaysian Insider
January 17 , 2012
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KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 17 — Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Chor Chee Heung today urged Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng to consult the local government council before implementing a gazette exempting state authorities from seeking a court declaration to conduct council elections.

On Friday, Lim had proposed issuing a gazette notification exempting all local Penang authorities from applying section 15 of the Local Government Act 1976 to conduct local government elections.

“We have a national council for matters pertaining to land that is chaired by the deputy prime minister (Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin). Members of the council include all the chief executives of every state,” Chor (picture) told reporters today after launching the Malaysia Top Property Developers 2011/ 2012 coffee table book here.

“I urge (Lim) to perhaps discuss this at the local government council, Majlis Negara Kerajaan Tempatan (MNKT). He should bring it up and discuss it before implementing it,” he added.

Chor said that since 1976 the constitution did not allow for local government elections.

“So far as we are concerned local government election is a no-go because the constitution does not allow,” he said.

“But if he has any queries or any ideas of implementing it, bring it to the MNKT and then we will discuss this matter.”

Chor added that “I do not want to say if it’s in his power to exempt or not”.

In his press statement, Lim had said one of the DAP’s key agenda was the restoration of local government elections.

“The Penang PR state government has pressed for local government elections to enable councillors and mayors to be directly elected ever since we took power in 2008,” he said, adding that he would propose directing the State Legal Adviser to issue the gazette notification at this week’s exco meeting.

“This is a necessary precursor to take the issue to court to seek a declaration.”

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