

Guan Eng flays Soi Lek over graft in BN
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By Shannon Teoh

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 18 – Lim Guan Eng took his rival Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek to task today over alleged corruption within Barisan Nasional (BN), singling out the RM12.5 billion Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) scandal where two former MCA leaders have been charged with cheating the government.

The DAP secretary general said in a debate with Dr Chua if Pakatan Rakyat (PR) took over federal government, it would stem leakages due to graft, allowing it to abolish tolls and offer Sabah and Sarawak a hike in oil royalties to 20 per cent from the current 5 per cent.

“The PKFZ is not the first scandal involving MCA leaders. What change has MCA done and how is it no Umno leader has been prosecuted?” he said of the project which was first mooted when former MCA boss Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik was transport minister.

Both Dr Ling and his ministerial successor Tan Sri Chan Kong Choy, a former MCA deputy president, face charges of lying to the Cabinet after the project, initially estimated at less than RM2 billion, more than doubled to RM4.6 billion by 2007.

“We want to establish a policy state not a police state. If we win, we will abolish tolls on the North-South Expressway and Penang bridge and increase oil royalties in Sabah and Sarawak,” Lim told an audience of 800 who were largely MCA supporters.

“If we take over Putrajaya, we will give you RM1,000 every year,” a smiling Lim added, referring to the RM500 direct cash given by the Najib administration to all households with a monthly income below RM3,000.

But Dr Chua also insisted MCA is anti-graft “which is why we never demonstrate when our leaders are charged,” an apparent reference to PR’s assembly outside the court here when Opposition Leader Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim faced the verdict for his sodomy trial on January 9.

“We have confidence in the law. We never say our leaders are innocent,” the former health minister added, saying he could not comment on the case specifically as it would be subjudice.

The stern-looking former Labis MP also dismissed Lim’s promises and pointed out Penang has not done away with the Sg Nyior toll in Butterworth despite promising to do so during Election 2008.

The debate, themed “Chinese at a Crossroads. Is the 2 Party System Becoming a 2 Race System?” was also screened on Astro in both Mandarin and with Malay translation.

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