

DAP twisted PM's port status reply'

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GEORGE TOWN: DAP leaders here may have twisted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak's reply to the state BN regarding the reinstatement of the state's free port status, said a Chinese current affairs website.

It said DAP leaders were withholding the full text of Najib's written reply in Parliament and had, instead, "twisted the facts and distorted the truth" about it.

It said this in a report titled "PM has never refused reviving Penang's free port status. (Chief Minister) Lim Guan Eng has twisted PM's reply at Parliament". The website, www.souminews.com, deals with local issues.

Earlier this month, pro-opposition websites said Lim had "called Penang BN's bluff over the free port promise".

He was quoted as demanding that Penang BN apologise for dangling the promise of restoring the island's free port status since Najib had shot down the proposal.

Lim had claimed that Najib had made the statement at Parliament and questioned whether the state BN had lied about it or if the promise was just to woo voters.

Penang BN chief Teng Chang Yeow recently pledged to restore the state's free port status if the coalition recaptured Penang in the next general election.

Lim said Najib had said that since Penang had five free trade zones and the concept of a free port no longer existed, the issue of Penang becoming a free port "does not arise".

Najib reportedly said this in a reply to DAP Bukit Bendera member of parliament Liew Chin Tong, who had asked about the island's free port status.

Lim, who is also DAP secretary-general, had reiterated that "Najib has said very clearly there is no free port".

Souminews.com obtained Najib's reply to Lim on June 19. Najib said: "Although the free port status is no longer in existence, the Federal Government is aware that Penang BN has proposed to come up with a new concept to spur economic development in Penang, especially in the tourism and service sectors.

"The Federal Government will give due consideration based on the feedback and support from the people, as well as the innovative proposal."

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