

Guan Eng dares BN to make stand on MCA's racist remarks

Free Malaysia Today

May 24, 2017

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Chief minister condemns remark made by Penang MCA over state government's high allocation for Islamic affairs since 2008.

GEORGE TOWN: MCA was in the spotlight at the Penang assembly here again, following an earlier controversial statement that the Chinese were being neglected by the state government.

During this evening's winding-up speech at the house, Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng (DAP-Air Putih) told the opposition Umno bench to take a stand on the claim made by Penang MCA chairman Tan Teik Cheng that the Penang government was too focused on Islamic affairs.

Shariful Azhar Othman (BN-Bertam) however said he could not take a stand on the matter as it was Tan's personal view.

Shariful also said such attacks from Lim were unnecessary considering the chief minister deliberately spoke about Tan and MCA at the state assembly, knowing full well that the party's state chairman was seated in the gallery.

"I can send them (MCA) the message. But whether they will follow or not, I do not know. He is a non-Muslim and not a Malay," Shariful told Lim.

To this, Lim responded: "I am not a Muslim or a Malay, but I dare condemn MCA's racist statement. Do you dare do the same?"

State executive councillor Chow Kon Yeow chimed in, saying, "Going by MCA's logic, we can safely say that our friends at the Umno bench are also anti-Chinese for giving too much allocations for Islamic affairs. Any comment?"

The BN reps however remained silent amid jeers from the backbenchers.

Chow was referring to opposition leader Jahara Hamid's (BN-Telok Ayer Tawar) claim that BN had spent RM462.1 million on Islamic affairs in Penang from 2008 to date.

Jahara said this while commenting on the Pakatan Harapan government's claim that it spent more than RM400 million on the state's Islamic affairs during the same time span.

Yesterday, Tan, who is also Penang Port Commission chairman, held a watching brief at the assembly with 10 other MCA members and slammed the Penang government for being too pro-Muslim by giving too much for Islamic affairs.

He added that the Chinese, who were the majority race in Penang were at the losing end as Malays got most of the state government's goodies.

Tan said close to RM460 million was spent on Islamic affairs from 2008 to 2016 under Pakatan Harapan while BN spent a total of RM249 million in Penang from 1999 to 2007.

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Source: <http://www.freemalaysiatoday.com/category/nation/2017/05/24/guan-eng-dares-bn-to-make-stand-on-mcas-racist-remarks/>