

## **Hold on, Guan Eng tells Penang volunteer unit members**

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**By Predeep Nambiar**

**Penang chief minister says although they can assume duties it is better to wait as the federal government may appeal the Court of Appeal's decision at the Federal Court.**

GEORGE TOWN: The Penang government has advised all Penang Voluntary Patrol Unit (PPS) members to hang on for another month before resuming their neighbourhood watch duties, in anticipation of their legality issue escalating to the Federal Court.

This is after the Court of Appeal ruled yesterday that the PPS, declared illegal by the home minister in 2014, had been lawfully set up by the Penang government.

Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng said although PPS members could choose to resume their duties, the "final hurdle" needed to be cleared first.

"PPS maybe may continue, but what is the use if they appeal against the decision? You might have to stop again.

"We are grateful to our lawyers who had fought for PPS and its members and I am sure this decision will vindicate those who were arrested on Merdeka day in 2014," Lim said at a press conference in Komtar today.

Lim said the Penang Voluntary Body (BPS), formed after PPS was declared illegal, would likely be absorbed into a single unit if there was no appeal against the decision at the Federal Court.

Attorney-General Mohamed Apandi Ali has since confirmed he would be taking the case to the Federal Court.

PPS, which had more than 9,000 members, was formed by the Penang government in 2011 to help with voluntary work and to fight crime in neighbourhoods.

However, it was declared illegal and marked as a threat to public security by the Home Ministry in 2014, after the Registrar of Societies' declared PPS an "unregistered" body.

Then on Aug 31, 2014, police arrested 158 PPS members at the state-level Merdeka parade on the Esplanade Road.

BPS was formed more recently, under the auspices of 40 Village Security, Safety and Development Committees (JKKK) in the state.

Last December, Inspector-General of Police Khalid Abu Bakar advised the Penang government to dissolve the BPS, saying: "We will most likely outlaw it as well. So it's better to dissolve it as the police are capable of ensuring there is public order in Penang."

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