

**Guan Eng to sue over report that he made 'veiled threat'**  
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**His office says defamatory action will be taken against 'BN media' and the deputy director of the BN's strategic communications arm.**

PETALING JAYA: Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng has “no choice” but to sue the parties behind a claim that he had made veiled threats against Penangites in stating the state’s i-Sejahtera welfare programme would be affected if he is imprisoned.

In a statement today, Lim’s office named the New Straits Times and Barisan Nasional’s strategic communications (BNSC) arm’s deputy director Eric See-To as being involved in “malicious and vicious lies”.

“Lim Guan Eng had never made such a statement or a speech yesterday at the Penang DAP Hari Raya Aidilfitri open house in Jawi, Nibong Tebal,” the statement said.

It said action will be taken against BN media and BNSC deputy director for the defamatory allegation.

See-To was yesterday cited by NST as urging Lim to face his corruption charges head-on without trying to “spin” the facts surrounding the case.

“According to a news report, the Penang CM had warned that his prosecution for corruption puts the state administration’s welfare programmes on the line and that the needy in Penang will suffer,” he was quoted as saying.

“BNSC strongly condemns this veiled threat which we see as an attempt by Guan Eng to mock and undermine our legal system.

“Penang is bigger than Lim and the chief minister should stop having this inflated opinion about himself,” he was reported as saying.

The NST report said Lim had earlier yesterday claimed Penang folk were angry that a leader of a “clean government” had been charged with corruption and were afraid that his incarceration would affect the welfare programmes.

The statement from Lim’s office also claimed that the BN federal government was trying to use the corruption charges against him to cover up allegations of financial misappropriation of funds related to 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB).

It added that Lim had said the charges over the purchase of his residence were politically motivated to destroy his political career.

On June 30 last year, Lim, who has been Penang chief minister since March 2008, was charged with using his public office or position to obtain gratification for himself and his wife, Betty Chew, by approving an application by Magnificent Emblem Sdn Bhd to convert agricultural land for residential purposes during a state exco meeting on July 18, 2014.

Lim, who is also DAP secretary-general, was also alleged to have used his position to obtain gratification by purchasing a bungalow from businesswoman Phang Li Koon for RM2.8 million, below the property's market value of RM4.7 million on July 28, 2015.

Lim and Phang have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

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