

Koh can remain CM, says Keng Yaik

The Sun - 7/8/06

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PENANG: Gerakan deputy president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, who is set to succeed Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik as

president next year, can choose to remain chief minister, or not to hold any government position at all.

Lim said Koh has three choices - be Gerakan president and not hold any

other post, remain Penang chief minister or become a minister.

"This is because in the past, we have had Gerakan presidents who did not hold any other posts, who remained chief minister, who was only a state executive councillor, or who became a minister," he said.

Speaking at the launch of the Gerakan annual delegates conference here yesterday morning, Lim urged the media to stop speculating on Koh's next step once he becomes Gerakan president, saying he (Koh) would announce it when the time comes.

On recent criticisms aimed at Gerakan, Lim said some "cowboys" in the Opposition and Barisan Nasional component parties were using racial sentiments against Gerakan and Koh.

"This is because they have hidden motives for their own personal gain, and not for the rakyat," he said.

Penang Umno Youth recently called on the government to rotate the Penang chief minister's post among Barisan Nasional component parties.

At least 10 of the 15

Umno Youth divisions in Penang are said to have reached a consensus to table the matter at their divisional meetings next week before bringing it up at the Umno divisional delegates conferences.

"I have seen 'cowboys' like these for so many years. Don't you try to challenge Gerakan because we strongly support what is good for the people and the country, and we fully support the prime minister," Lim said.

He said the "cowboys" were using the media to raise racial sentiments when they have *udang di sebalik batu* (hidden

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motives).

"We in Gerakan will get rid of the *batu* and eat all the *udang*," Lim said.

On his imminent retirement from the post of president, Lim declined to set a date.

"I will step down after I turn 68, but also during my 26th year as president in Gerakan, so you do the calculations," he said.