

Nine months and still waiting for govt to name PPC chairman

GEORGE TOWN: It has been nine months since Pakatan Harapan took over the federal government, and the Penang Port Commission (PPC) is still operating without a chairman.

The state government is anxiously awaiting a favourable decision from the Transport Ministry.

Talks have been rife that the delay in naming a chairman for PPC is because both Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) and DAP were vying for the post.

The post had been vacant since state MCA chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng stepped down after the loss of Barisan Nasional in the 14th General Election last May.

Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow, when asked through WhatsApp messaging, if there was a tussle between DAP and Pribumi, said that it was a question for Transport Minister Anthony Loke to answer.

"We have submitted the candidate's name for the post to the minister and it is best he (Anthony) replies as beyond submission, I am not privy to decisions made at the national level," said Chow.

State Bersatu chairman Datuk Marzuki Yahya, in a message, denied that the party was vying for the post.

Loke who was in George Town last September for the signing ceremony between Penang Port Sdn Bhd (PPSB) and Royal Caribbean Cruises Ltd for the Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal proposed expansion, had then said no decision was made yet on the appointment, as Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad would vet the candidates for the post.

Meanwhile, work on the terminal's RM155mil expansion which was to begin in March this year, is now being pushed to September.

It is learnt that the delay was due to the PPC board convening its meeting late as a chairman is yet to be named.

It is believed that state secretary Datuk Seri Farizan Darus had chaired the meeting on Jan 28 and the board had then agreed to the terms and conditions for a 30-year concession for the land which has been marked for expansion.

PPSB, which is the terminal's concessionaire, is in the process of paying the premium for the land.

PPSB chief executive officer Sasedharan Vasudevan, when contacted, said the 12-month period for the expansion work would be completed in September 2020.

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