

Six names for PPC top post

PDC deputy general manager likely the top choice of Pakatan leadership

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GEORGE TOWN: The most likely candidate speculated to be the next Penang Port Commission (PPC) chairman is a "resourceful, behind-the-scenes" DAP man.

Sources revealed that from a list of six DAP and PKR state leaders, Penang DAP assistant treasurer Jeffrey Chew is the top choice of the Pakatan Harapan leadership.

Two sources in Penang DAP's committee revealed that Chew is the favoured candidate.

"He is the recommendation of the Finance Ministry," one source revealed.

However, state PKR chairman Datuk Mansor Othman and state Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia chairman Marzuki Yahaya said they would meet Penang DAP chief and Chief Minister Chow Kon Yeow at the end of this month to discuss the PPC chairman's post.

DAP sources revealed that other names put forward included former executive councillors Danny Law, Lim Hock Seng, former Tanjung MP Ng Wei Aik, former PKR assemblymen Cheah Kah Peng and Ong Chin Wen.



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Jeffrey Chew

Chew claims no knowledge that he was nominated but admitted that he heard his name was put forward.

"I heard it but no one communicated it to me. I never got any indication I would be nominated," he said.

Little is known about Chew, who stays out of the limelight.

He is at present one of four deputy general managers II in Penang Development Corporation (PDC) and oversees the strategy, planning and entrepreneur; corporate communication; and contract management divisions.

He was former chief minister Lim Guan Eng's special assistant in

2008 and from 2009 to 2016, he became Guan Eng's special officer on manufacturing, industries and investments.

In the 2013 elections, he was almost chosen to contest in the Pulau Tikus state seat but was replaced by Guan Eng's then science officer Yap Soo Huey, who won.

According to the Penang Port Commission Act 1955, the chairman shall be appointed by and shall hold office at the pleasure of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, while PPC board members shall be appointed by the Transport Minister.

A source in Parliament revealed that the PPC chairman's salary was

previously RM15,000 a month, on top of allowances for entertainment, travelling and meetings.

He is also assigned a car and driver, and can hire a special assistant.

For years, expanding Penang Port had been a challenge because of the previous strain in relationship between the federal and state governments.

Despite this impediment, operator Penang Port Sdn Bhd rakes in steadily increasing annual profits by grabbing large chunks of shipping businesses from Southern Thailand.

Although, the ferry segment of the port operation has run at a loss for decades, other port facilities such as the North Butterworth Container Terminal, Swettenham Pier Cruise Terminal, deepwater wharf, bulk cargo terminal and vegetable oil tanker pier see increasing gains each year.

In May, Penang's ferry services was officially taken over by Rapid Ferry Sdn Bhd, a subsidiary of Prasarana Berhad.

The PPC chairman's post fell vacant when state MCA chairman Datuk Tan Teik Cheng stepped down after Barisan Nasional lost the general election.

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