

Grassroots MCA Youth wants contests

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KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Grassroots MCA Youth members do not favour the no-contest advice for the upcoming party elections, leaders from Teams A and B said today.

MCA Youth national vice-chairman Datuk Liew Yuen Keong of Team B said based on feedback, many Youth leaders were agreeable to peace and stability in the party but also wanted to see contests.

“The Youth movement is considered a training ground for young members. The older ones should make way for them, especially those above the 45-year age limit,” said Liew, who is also the Seri Kembangan Assemblyman.

He said that the movement, unlike the parent body, could have its by-laws amended and reviewed by the central committee. The term for Youth office-bearers is three years but it can be extended with approval of the CC.

Party leaders, Liew said, could only advise aspirants not to contest but it would be difficult to force them to do so.

“I suggest we hold the Youth elections later. The CC can decide on that.

“Maybe a year later or after the next general election,” he said, adding that a cooling-off period was also important for the party to close ranks.

However, before the Youth elections were held the membership list should be cleaned up first, Liew said. If elections were held as scheduled, then this meant that the party recognised the disputed membership list.

Meanwhile, Perak Youth chairman Datuk Ho Cheng Wang of Team A also said the majority of Youth members favoured a contest.

“If the parent body’s central committee does not want to have contests, that is up to them. But many Youth members want contests,” said Ho who is also Perak executive council member.

Younger members, by nature, wanted contests and its absence could lead to accusations that the party was not democratic, Ho said.

Asked whether the Youth elections should be held as scheduled or after the next general election,

Ho said it was up to the CC to decide.

“Whatever is decided by the central committee next Thursday, the Youth must follow, even if the party stands firm on the no-contests advice,” Ho added.

Last Tuesday, president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik announced that party leaders would go to the ground and advise members against contesting in the MCA polls from the divisional levels onwards.

This was part of the peace plan drawn up after Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad mediated in the MCA crisis.