

'Dynasty' syndrome returns to haunt DAP

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PETALING JAYA: The "family dynasty" syndrome has returned to haunt the DAP in its former stronghold state of Penang.

The more aggressive young Turks in the party are again upset with the two veteran leaders – chairman Lim Kit Siang and his deputy Karpal Singh.

A party insider told *theSun*: "Some members have even started a whispering campaign, likening the growing distress as round two of the infamous Knock-Out-Kit-Siang (KOKS) Campaign in 1998, about a year before the 10th general election in 1999."

KOKS resulted in a mass resignation of DAP veterans and strongmen in Penang, led by then state chairman Teoh Teik Huat.

Lim, who made way for Teoh to lead Penang DAP after the party was reduced from 14 assemblymen in 1990 to only one in 1995, was thought to have taken the blame for the humiliating defeat when he made way for Teoh.

After knocking out Gerakan veteran Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu in Padang Kota in 1990, an overconfident Lim mounted a similar challenge in 1995.

Lim was soundly beaten by Gerakan vice-president and Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon.

Many party members had felt it was a wrong strategy for DAP to try and unseat a Chinese chief minister but Lim was adamant and went ahead with his plans.

After taking over the helm of the party in the state, Teoh and his team started rebuilding the DAP only to see Lim returning to stamp his influence.

DAP suffered another beating in the November 1999 national polls.

"Jadryn Loo Hooi Yee's recent resignation from all party posts in the state, including her paid job as political researcher for Penang DAP, is only the tip of the iceberg.

"Another young and rising DAP star, Batu Gajah MP Fong Po Kuan, is also facing similar stress after shooting into prominence by having herself suspended by parliament for refusing to apologise for making unparliamentary remarks," the insider said.

"It is not so much that Lim and Karpal are unacceptable to the young Turks. It is a clash of ideologies and nepotic decision-makings that are splitting the party leaders.

"Lim and Karpal's continuous promotion of their children in the party irks the young blood who have been working doubly hard to promote themselves and the party as public service providers, attending to whatever complaints received daily."

Lim's daughter Hui Ying is Penang

DAP secretary while Karpal's son Jagdeep Singh Deo is a committee member. At national level, Lim has his son, Guan Eng in place while his daughter-in-law Betty Chew Gek Cheng is Durian Daun assemblyman in Malacca.

"The frustration is worsened by what they call the lazy or arm chair politicians who have all the time in the world to play the patronage and backstabbing political game," he said.

Lim's lack of tolerance for criticism, dissent and differences of opinion in the DAP leadership is also not helping matters.

"The problem couldn't have come at the worst possible time, with the 11th general election looming.

"If the current problems are not nipped in the bud, the party is surely heading for a third consecutive thrashing by the Barisan Nasional in electoral polls," the insider said.

A former party veteran, who was once a central executive committee member, said: "It appears that Lim and Karpal have not learnt anything from previous leadership splits, jealousy and electoral defeats.

"They should both make way for the young so that the DAP can rejuvenate. If Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad can make way for the general interest of Umno; why not these two who have children holding influential positions in the party they lead?" he asked.