

**Karpal-Ramasamy spat still on
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By Susan Loone**

DAP chairperson Karpal Singh has rejected the party disciplinary committee's decision to clear charges of a disciplinary breach against party deputy secretary-general P Ramasamy.

At a press conference in Penang today, Karpal said the disciplinary committee was not fit to probe Ramasamy, as the latter is a member of the same panel.

Karpal Singh PC Penang 180312 Karpal (right), a veteran lawyer and lawmaker, said the disciplinary committee members should have relinquished their positions and allowed a new committee to be formed which could take up the case.

"The seed of destruction has already been sowed from the beginning. They sat in judgement of one of themselves" he said.

Apart from Ramasamy, national vice-chairperson Tan Kok Wai and Penang vice-chairperson Lim Hock Seng are on the committee.

Karpal also revealed that two Penang DAP leaders - RSN Rayer and A Tanasekharan - had filed an appeal on behalf of 33 others against the committee's decision to clear Ramasamy.

He expects the matter to be discussed by the party's central executive committee soon, and if necessary, be brought to the national party congress for a decision.

P Ramasamy 160211 "In any court of justice, this will not be accepted. It can't be done and should not be done (to have the committee sit in judgement of its own member)," he said.

Ramasamy (left) was accused of orchestrating a demonstration - outside the Pearl View Hotel during the party's state convention in Penang on Dec 11 - against Rayer and Tanasekharan.

Tan, who chairs the disciplinary committee, had said on March 12 that "there is no direct evidence" linking Ramasamy to the incident, and hence the latter is cleared of the allegation.

The spat between Karpal and Ramasamy hit public headlines when the latter said that there should not be any "godfathers" in the party.

He was responding to Karpal's statement that only the DAP's top leadership could appoint election candidates.

'Meeting was held'

Meanwhile, Karpal was asked to comment about a recent posting in a certain blog that had commented that Ramasamy may be seeing the end of his political career.

The blog claimed that Ramasamy had been ordered to toe the line or face the axe, at a "secret" meeting amongst DAP leaders in Kuala Lumpur, even before the disciplinary committee's decision.

DAP convention Shah Alam 080112 Karpal Ramasamy The blog alleged that at the end of the meeting, it was agreed that all of Ramasamy's appointees in the Penang Hindu Endowment Board (HEB) and the state Appeals Board would be dropped.

They include K Mangaleswari, who is said to have been suddenly elevated to various positions of power. Three others who are to be axed as well - K Anbalakan, S Gunalan and E Jothi - are all Ramasamy's cronies in the board, the blog alleged.

Karpal denied it was a 'secret meeting' but admitted that such a session to resolve matters within the party had taken place.

The said meeting, he added, was attended by DAP advisor Lim Kit Siang, Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng, state DAP chief Chow Kon Yeow, Rayer, Tanasekharan, and Ramasamy himself.

He conceded that he spoke his mind during the meeting "like my (usual) style of speaking".

"It is unfortunate that the details of the meeting was leaked out, but that is not the point. We must be transparent and state the truth," replied Karpal.

"I don't lie and I won't lie, that (meeting) did happen. But since the matter is made public, I have to respond to it. I speak for the sake of public interest, that is above everything else," he added.

'HEB must be apolitical'

Karpal said the four Ramasamy's appointees in the HEB have to vacate their posts as soon as possible.

He added that he had made it "very clear" how he felt about Mangleswari, whom he said had been propelled into various important positions.

protest against ramasamy and hindu endowment board 020112 02"She is not only a member of the HEB but the Appeals Boards which is a very powerful body that hears appeals from project developers. She is also Juru DAP chief and the state Wanita deputy chair as well," he added.

In the interest of transparency, Karpal said, HEB should not have any political appointees, as positions should be given to those who are "apolitical and on the ground".

In a related matter, Karpal clarified that he was absent during the state party's recent fundraising dinner due to an important legal case in Shah Alam and not out of any alleged 'boycott'.

He said he had informed Chow of his engagement and had requested if the function could be held on a Saturday instead, to which the latter had replied was not possible.

"It was not that I was afraid to face anybody," the veteran lawyer sniped in response to the boycott speculations over his absence at the event along with that of Rayer and Tanasekharan.

