

Three-cornered fights if DAP fails to get more seats

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By Susan Loone

If the DAP fails to obtain more seats to contest in the coming general election, the party may have no choice but to go for three-cornered battles.

kedah defection ceramah 220510 dap adun lee guan aikDAP's sole assemblyperson in Kedah, Lee Guan Aik (right), said this was not the party's intention nor the people's desire but the political landscape in Kedah has changed since 2008.

Lee, who is the Kota Darulaman representative, said DAP wants to play a bigger role in the Kedah government, and therefore wishes to have a bigger representation in the state.

"We are not demanding, we will let our national leadership decide and we will respect that decision but we would like to have more seats as we do have strongholds in Kedah too," he told Malaysiakini.

"It is not that we want to lessen PAS' influence in the state but due to the spillover effect of strong support for Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng in Penang, support for us here is increasing," he added.

Lee was referring to yesterday's announcement by Kedah Menteri Besar Azizan Abdul Razak that DAP would not be getting any additional seat in the next general election.

Azizan was quoted by the media as saying the seat distribution among PAS, PKR and DAP was based on the 2008 status quo.

Creating problems for Pakatan Rakyat

Lee disagreed with Azizan's statement, saying he was uncertain whether the state PAS commissioner "was merely playing politics or out to create trouble for Pakatan Rakyat in Kedah".

According to Lee, the MB has made such statements several times already.

On the possibility of Pakatan parties disputing over seats, Lee said this was possible at state level but not when it is deliberated by the central Pakatan leadership.

NONELee said Azizan (left) could not rely on the situation in 2008 to decide on seat allocations for the 13th general election, which must be called by May next year.

In the previous polls, DAP was not really together with PAS after having learnt a bitter lesson due to the Islamic state controversy, he added.

"However, this time around the people want us to be together. We went into the elections not realising that this was what led us to victory," he said.

"When it actually happened, we regretted that we had asked for too few seats but then it was still fine as we had a moral victory," he added.

Lee said Pakatan did well because of the one-to-one seat policy in the last polls and did lose a couple of seats due to three-cornered fights.

He added that this was indicative of the fact that the component parties must cooperate and compromise when it comes to seat allocation.

Malay support in state increasing

"There is a need for consensus and it is unavoidable that some seats must be sacrificed," he said.

However, Lee lamented that it is a challenge to speak to PAS about the matter, a problem also faced by the state PKR.

He decried that it would be "unfair" to merely allocate one state seat for DAP when the party has supporters in several areas, with active branches in its original strongholds.

He identified areas like Bakar Arang, Gurun and Sungai Petani as having long-time DAP influence and recently increasing Malay support.

The Sungai Petani parliamentary seat is currently held by PKR's Johari Abdul.

Lee said DAP was seeking six state seats and two parliamentary seats in the coming election.

There are currently 36 state seats in Kedah - Pakatan only has 20, BN 14 and there are two Independents - in Lunas and Bakar Arang.

In 2008, PAS contested 24 state seats and won 16; PKR contested 11 but won four, where two of them became Independents later. The DAP won one seat, while the remaining 14 seats are held by BN.

Meanwhile, Lee's rival, MCA Kedah chief Chong Iit Chew, has criticised the former for speaking up only when it concerns seat allocation but remaining quiet on other issues which are detrimental to the welfare and livelihood of the rakyat.

Chong said Lee spoke on the matter twice this year - in February when PKR state chief Wan Salleh Wan Isa had commented that DAP should stop dreaming about the Derga state assembly seat, which is currently held by Gerakan.

He added that Lee had remained silent when the PAS central committee had "hijacked" the state by imposing an "unelected committee of outsiders" to monitor and watch over the comings and goings of the state's administration.

He stressed that the DAP leader also remained silent on the issue of 30 percent 'rebate' requested from Chinese associations which received state allocations by a former aide of PKR exco member Tan Joo Long.

"As the sole DAP representative in the state' one would have expected him to have been more vocal concerning the rakyat's welfare, but instead he chooses to be outspoken in defending seat allocations for DAP," Chong said.

"Thus it can be surmised that DAP is only looking after their own welfare and only interested in gaining support for themselves," he added.

