

Teng's BlackBerry blunder sparks BN walkout
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By Nigel Aw

A text-message via BlackBerry urging exco members to promote the Selangor government's successes, sent out by state assembly speaker Teng Chang Khim, has angered BN representatives.

They accused him of bias before a majority of them staged a walkout today.

It is understood that the text-message was mistakenly sent to former exco member Hasan Ali, and later found its way into the hands of BN assemblypersons who said this was evidence that the speaker was not acting impartially.

NONEThe text-message reads: 'This is possibly the last winding-up session for exco, opportunity should be fully used to talk about our successes in the last last four years like what (Kota Anggerik state assemblyperson) Yaakob (Sapari) is doing now.'

The issue was raised by Mohd Shamsudin Lias (BN-Sungai Burong) during the sitting this morning and the text-message was subsequently read out by Mohd Isa Abu Kasim (BN-Batang Kali) who demanded an explanation from Teng.

"How can we debate if the speaker is biased? He has abused his power to influence the debate issues," Isa said.

"The speaker has deceived us all this while. He claims he is fair but he is not, we demand that he apologises to the House."

However, Teng refused to apologise and urged Isa to move a motion against him, if he disagrees with this.

This led to seven of the 10 BN state assemblypersons walking out of the chamber.

This is the second time a Pakatan Rakyat speaker of a state legislative assembly has been accused of bias, the first being V Sivakumar of Perak.

In 2009, purported transcripts of a computer instant messaging exchange were revealed, showing then-exco members Ngeh Khoo Ham and Nga Kor Ming providing extensive instructions to Sivakumar on how to conduct the state assembly sitting in June 2008.

Bloggers who revealed the documents alleged that the documents were proof of the "remote control" Ngeh and Nga had over Sivakumar.

'BN won't pursue matter'

Speaking to reporters later, Kuang assemblyperson Abdul Shukor Idrus said he and his colleagues would no longer attend this sitting as they have "lost faith" in the speaker.

Kuang assemblyperson Abdul Shukor Idrus walkout selangor assembly 1 "Instructing the excos is not the responsibility of the speaker. It is the responsibility of the menteri besar," said Abdul Shukor (centre in photo).

Asked if a motion would be moved against Teng, Abdul Shukor replied: "It is no longer important, we are disappointed."

Teng, who called for a press conference shortly afterwards, reiterated his call for BN to move a motion against him if they feel that they have been wronged.

"If they move a motion I will not sit in the speaker's seat, I will go down and sit with the rest," he said.

Denying that he was biased, Teng said he has also ticked off exco members during the sitting if they had erred.

"For example, I had advised exco member (Dr) Xavier Jeyakumar when he raised issues on the Election Commission and electoral roll (which are federal issues) yesterday," he said.

Teng described Hasan, whom he claims forwarded the text-message to the BN members, as "ungentlemanly" and said this is indicative of a close link between him and Umno.

Teng is a multiple-term assemblyperson and is thus the longest-serving elected representative in Selangor Pakatan.

In contrast, current exco members are entirely made up of first-time assemblypersons.

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