

## **Let Gerakan lead state BN, says Penang Umno Youth**

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**By Susan Loone**

Contrary to the views of its own chief, Penang Umno Youth wants Gerakan to continue to hold the state BN head post.

State Umno Youth chief Shaik Hussein Mydin said that the best person still to lead the party is Gerakan secretary-general Teng Chang Yeow.

NONEShaik Hussein (right) urged Teng to seriously consider his resignation as he should not take sole responsibility for the failure of the coalition to capture Penang in the just-concluded general election.

"Everybody in BN is responsible for the coalition's poor performance in Penang, not Teng alone, although he is the chairperson," Shaik Hussein told Malaysiakini.

"At least, he has experienced the losing strategy and machinery," he added, when asked whether Umno should be taking over the post as Gerakan failed to obtain any seats in the May 5 polls.

The proposal came about following Teng's immediate resignation from the state BN chief post on May 5, as soon as the results were announced.

Only Umno managed to win 10 seats - one less than it previously won in the 2008 general election - while its allies repeated that year's dismal performance, thus sending the parties, which once governed the state since independence, into the twilight zone.

State Umno liason chief Zainal Abidin Osman later suggested that the party could helm the post if Gerakan does not wish to hold it anymore.

Since the polls, there has been a lack of activities involving the BN and its leaders, with some saying that their service centres would be shut down.

The MCA, too, seemed to be split in half, with several divisions calling for their party chief Dr Chua Soi Lek to resign, while others want the normal internal election process to be concluded properly.

'DAP faced defeats in the past too'

Shaik Hussein reminded the coalition leaders that the DAP - including its senior leader Lim Kit Siang - faced several defeats and difficulties before they managed to capture Penang in 2008.

"If Gerakan and MCA still want Umno to lead the team, the best (thing to do) is to form a panel with members from political parties and NGOs, comprising those with experience and young members," he said.

"They should come from members of different races and backgrounds to oversee the strategy of Penang BN as it goes into the 14th general election.

"Time is very precious, and action from everybody is needed now," he stressed.

NONEMeanwhile, Penang Malay Congress (PMC) said it was aware that the BN component parties may want to preserve its 1974 agreement of allowing Gerakan to helm the state chief post.

"But that agreement is no longer relevant, it is over and done (macam nasi jadi bubur)," said PMC president Rahmad Isahak (left).

"The geo-political situation in the country and the support of the Chinese community is no longer with them (Gerakan), and they also no longer play any role in the cabinet, although this is upon the request of their own leaders," he noted.

"So what is wrong if Umno is given the chance to take up the state BN chief post? It must be reminded that this post is to represent all races and the people of Penang," said Rahmad.

"Can't Umno represent the interests of all communities and ethnic groups in the state?" he queried.

Rahmad further said that BN must continue its transformation plan, and therefore needed a democratic change within itself.

"Likewise, Umno leaders in the state must also change in their leadership style so that they would not repeat the same (bad) performance in the general elections," added Rahmad.

