

## **Zairil dismisses claims of coup against Kedah DAP**

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**By Susan Loone**

The DAP has dismissed any claims by its own members that the central leadership is planning to oust the party's incumbent leaders in Kedah.

Kedah DAP interim chief Zairil Khir Johari said the state leadership underwent some change after the May 5 general election in order to "shake up" the team to strengthen the party.

"The changes in the state Kedah leadership were in accordance with the party's constitution. We are not planning a coup and there is no hidden agenda when we changed the leadership," Zairil told Malaysiakini when contacted.

"The changes were meant as a renewal for the state party to inject some new blood after the elections. PAS did it too and it was done in the spirit of strengthening the party," added the Bukit Bendera MP, who is also political secretary to Penang Chief Minister Lim Guan Eng.

Zairil urged all members to unite against the party's common enemies and focus on the coming central executive committee (CEC) re-election, which will be held this Sunday in Kuala Lumpur.

"We should unite and not give the Registrar of Societies (ROS) or the BN the opportunity to run down our party," he added.

ROS had required DAP to hold a re-election when the party declared that there was an error in the announcement, following the party's internal polls in December last year, of those who won the top 20 posts to qualify for the CEC posts.

Following the new announcement, Zairil was said to have made it to the top 20 post when it was earlier declared that he did not.

This prompted several disgruntled members to lodge complaints with the ROS over the "technical glitch".

Zairil was responding to former DAP Kedah chairperson Lee Guan Aik's accusation that the party's central leadership had wanted to oust incumbent leaders in the state.

Lee, the former Kota Setar assemblyperson, was quoted in Sinar Harian yesterday as saying that DAP national organising secretary Thomas Su had openly admitted that the central leadership wanted to oust the incumbent line-up in Kedah.

Compact disc with 'proof of allegations'

"He said if it is not done (oust Kedah leaders), my group will surely win in the coming re-election," Lee had reportedly said, while producing a compact disc he said contained proof of his allegations to back his claims.

Lee was dropped as a candidate in the May 5 polls and lost his post as Kedah head honcho, being replaced by Zairil after the election, when the PAS-led Pakatan Rakyat government failed to retain Kedah.

He claimed that the manner in which members of the interim committee were appointed did not comply with the party's constitution.

When contacted, DAP's Derga assemblyperson Tan Kok Yew declined to comment about the issue beyond saying, "We leave it to the new CEC leadership to handle the matter."

Tan said this was an internal matter for the party leaders to handle and not for him to comment about.

"We want good governance and peace in the country, we will let the top leadership deal with the internal problem," he added.

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