

**Ramkarpal: It's unfair to accuse me of nepotism**  
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BUKIT GELUGOR DAP's Bukit Gelugor candidate Ramkarpal Singh has described accusations of nepotism hurled against him as "unfair".

Ramkarpal said his involvement in politics begun over 15 years ago since becoming a lawyer in his family's legal firms in Kuala Lumpur and Penang.

He added that he knows exactly how Parliament works and has experiences - in law and politics - not many people have.

"I understand how Parliament works first hand, I used to do it, including all the nitty-gritty bits. I do have experience, for all its worth," Ramkarpal told Malaysiakini in an exclusive interview at his family home along Western Road, Penang.

"It is certainly an experience that not many people have, let me remind them of that, for those who are quick to point the gun at me," added the 38 year-old lawyer, who read law at United Kingdom's Bristol University.

"It is a bit unfair to simply accuse me of not being qualified as I certainly do have the qualifications," stressed the third son of the late Karpal Singh.

Accusations against Ramkarpal had surfaced when speculation was rife that he was DAP's sole choice for the Bukit Gelugor seat, the polling day for which is May 25.

Ramkarpal became politically aware at the tender age of 11 when his father was detained under the draconian Internal Security Act for 15 months in October 1987.

He was part of the defence team for PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's Sodomy II trial, where the parliamentary opposition leader was sentenced to five years' jail, pending an appeal at the Federal Court.

Ramkarpal was also part of the defence team for Anwar who was charged under the Public Assembly Act 2012 with participating in the Bersih 3.0 rally.

'I probably took it for granted'

Asked why he did not join DAP earlier when he claimed to be so involved in the party's struggles, Ramkarpal replied, "I probably took it for granted, to be honest with you."

He denied becoming a member of the DAP merely to take part in the by-election as a

candidate, claiming to have taken up membership when his father, Karpal Singh, died on April 17.

Ramkarpal (right in photo) said when he finally joined the DAP, he had not even decided whether he wanted to be a candidate.

He was later chosen over four other names proposed by the Penang DAP by a three-member committee comprising secretary-general Lim Guan Eng, senior party adviser Lim Kit Siang and acting chairperson Tan Kok Wai.

“It dawned on me and I thought why not be a member? Eh, I have always been a part of this party, why am I not a member?” he said.

“I have been a de facto member all this while, if that makes any sense. I hope people can understand this,” he added.

Ramkarpal, whose campaign theme is ‘We are all Karpal Singh, the Legacy Continues’, is expected to win the seat over three others in the by-election - Parti Cinta Malaysia’s Huan Cheng Guan, and Independents Abu Backer Sidek Mohammad Zan and Mohamed Nabi Bux Mohd Nabi Sathar.

Karpal, who was then DAP national chairperson, had won the seat three times since 2004, retaining it with a large majority vote of 41,778 against MCA’s Teh Beng Yeam.

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