

Lose-lose situation for Liu, Tee and Teng?

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ANALYSIS Behind the recent sacking of Klang DAP councillor Tee Boon Hock lies a tussle between middle-tier state leaders who have a long standing love-hate relationship, that may result in a lose-lose situation for Tee and his former superior Ronnie Liu.

Their fate - along with that of Selangor speaker Teng Chang Khim - is now in the hands of the DAP disciplinary committee led by party vice-chairperson Tan Kok Wai.

azlanThe committee expelled Tee (left) from the party last Saturday on the grounds that he had abused Liu's letterhead to support his son's company. He has 14 days in which to file an appeal.

Liu and Teng will be called up by the committee on Aug 12 for their explanation on the issue of supporting letters and the "OMG! Real culprit is freed" comment on Twitter, respectively.

The trio became active in DAP at almost the same time 20 years ago, but there are old scores between them. The tussle has resurfaced due to the state party election which is expected to be held at the end of this year.

Following Tee's sacking, his supporters have claimed that he was the victim of an election conspiracy and pinned the blame on Liu, who had a falling out with him last year.

"How could those supporting letters leak to the media when they are only kept in the state assemblyperson's office?" a grassroots leader questioned when interviewed yesterday.

NONEThe recent developments are also not favourable to Liu (right) as several questions have been raised about his responsibility in monitoring his subordinate and why he had no knowledge that his letterhead had been 'abused'.

This is why most of the grassroots in Klang still support Tee, believing that the councillor was not involved in forging the letters or in corruption, while accepting that there is a conflict of interest in Tee's case.

The grassroots leader, who spoke on condition of anonymity, claimed that Tee had never forged any letters as they were actually signed on behalf of Liu and kept in the state assemblyperson's office.

"The state assemblyperson should take responsibility if he claims to have no knowledge about the letters," he stressed.

Besides, it is the Klang Municipal Council and not Tee that has the power to award the tender, he said.

Tee's comeback bleak

However, it would be very hard for Tee to make a comeback even if he wins the appeal, so the councillor's main objective now is to clear his name.

The grassroots leader also implied that disciplinary action was taken against Tee because he posed a threat to Liu's position in the party, being hardworking in dealing with the grassroots.

"Those who have done well will not be afraid to face the party election, but those who have done nothing will be afraid," he said.

He revealed that the party senior leadership had met Tee and Liu before the scandal to resolve their conflict, but that the effort failed.

Another source suggested this would be the best time to remove Liu as the exco member in charge of local government affairs, as he is being seen as a 'liability' to the state government.

However, it noted that his good relationship with the central leadership might save his position.

Tweet trouble

Meanwhile, Teng, who is not on good terms with Liu, was originally expected to be the beneficiary of the controversy.

It is said that Teng might 'inherit' Tee's supporters, who, according to some sources, may include members in as many as 70 of the 110 branches in Selangor that are eligible to vote in the state party election, once a final decision is made on the latter's sacking.

NONE However, the situation took a twist when Teng (left) himself was called up by the disciplinary committee because of his comment on Twitter, which claimed the "real culprit" had got away.

"If Teng faces disciplinary action, this shows that those in power fear that they might lose in the state party election," the source claimed.

If all of them face the music before the state party election, then the biggest beneficiaries would be the Young Turks including state chief Ean Yong Hian Wah, his deputy Tony Pua, secretary Lau Weng San and treasurer Hannah Yeoh, because they have not been dragged into the controversy.

It cannot also be ruled out that the central leadership might assign another leader to take over the state to solve the internal problems.

However, the controversy has already damaged DAP's image as several questions have been raised.

Many, including MCA, have questioned whether the party, a member of the Pakatan coalition governing Selangor, knew about the letters of support in advance, and why the leadership chose to support Tee in the beginning but later changed their stand.

The grassroots leader felt that the party has fallen into the trap laid by the mainstream media, which is controlled by the BN.

"They have played up the DAP problem to draw away attention from the prosecution of (Dr) Ling Liong Sik in relation to the PKFZ case, which is more significant," he said.

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