

'Generasi Reformasi' faces tough challenge in Penang
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The Generasi Reformasi team which is vying to take over the central PKR Youth leadership in the coming party election is set to meet one of its toughest challenges in Penang.

Supporters of the rival team led by supreme council member Badrul Hisham Shaharin, popularly known as Chegubard the 'street fighter', are telling the Generasi Reformasi team to back off and place their ears close to the ground before making their bid for the highly contested posts.

In Penang, the spotlight is on Pantai Jerejak assemblyperson Sim Tze Tzin who has publicly announced his desire to contest for the national vice-youth wing chief post.

Sim, who is also PKR supremo Anwar Ibrahim's political secretary, has aligned himself to Mohd Rafizi Ramli, who has recently announced that he will contest for the post of Youth chief to increase "dynamism" and bring a fresh line-up of multi-racial leaders within the wing.

Mohd Rafizi, who is the chief executive officer (CEO) at the Selangor economic adviser's office, is however, described by some Penang PKR Youth members as a "capitalist" and seen as too "academic" to take on the party's struggles.

Sim has landed himself in a quandary after making his intentions known as several of the state Youth members have told him frankly that he may not have all the support he needs to win the post.

"Sim is definitely in the elite group (kumpulan bangsawan). A good assemblyperson will listen to the grassroots especially the Youth wing in Penang. If he does not even listen to them, then it is up to him," said Kepala Batas PKR Youth chief Amizuddin Ahmat, when contacted.

"The YB has a choice, (members of the) Penang Youth wing also have their own choices. When fighting against the BN, we will support Sim, but within the party....we are not certain," he added.

Amizuddin, who is a former Seberang Perai municipal councillor, said that the majority of the members in Penang PKR Youth support Chegubard, who they said "has passed the test" and "this means we reject Rafizi".

Three-cornered tussle likely

The PKR Youth wing election is likely to see a three-cornered tussle for the top post, with Mohd Rafizi and Chegubard facing incumbent Shamsul Iskandar Md Akin.

Penang members have described the fight to be between the 'intellectuals' and "rabble rousers", while Shamsul Iskandar is seen as "neither here nor there".

The party elections would run from Sept 17 to Nov 21, where 400,000 members in 205 divisions will submit their nominations from tomorrow to Sept 12.

Meanwhile, Sim is not alone in his struggle to realise his ambitions as former state deputy

Women's wing chief Joyce Lee has indicated her support for him by praising the current party election system.

"Whoever wants to contest, let them do it based on principles of democracy. I would also like to contest for the central Youth post but alas, I am over the age limit," said Lee, who has since resigned from her post.

"Based on democratic principles competition is good as the grassroots have a choice, so the more the merrier for the party elections this time is very much like a mini-general election," she added.

In an immediate response to all the rumblings, Sim has asked his comrades to consider the effort and contribution of every candidate based on democratic principles.

"We are all in the Keadilan family and facing the same kind of struggle," he added in the latest posting on his Facebook page.

Sim, who is also a state executive council member, said he will vie for the post anyway as the determining factors (of his candidacy) are the voters, not individuals.

He said his team was actually the "underdog" and there is a big possibility that they will not be successful.

But he was confident that the members had an open democratic spirit as loyalty must be towards the party and not certain individuals.

"All I am asking is that everyone open their minds to consider with fairness what I have contributed to the party," he said.

"But we want to send a positive message to the young voters of Malaysia that there is variety and democracy in the party; let the members make a decision," he added.

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