

**Gerakan members rally to topple top leader Teng**  
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Gerakan, the BN component party that has ruled Penang for close to 40 years up to the last general election in 2008, appears to be on the brink of a massive leadership shakeup.

NONEA group of Penang party members are collecting signatures to call for an emergency general meeting to pass a 'no confidence' motion against state chairperson Teng Hock Nan (left).

According to the party's constitution, members only need about 50 or a quarter of the total delegates' signatures to call for the meeting, that is expected to take place at the party's headquarters on Oct 10, 10.30am.

The petition will be handed over to the party leadership by the middle of the month.

When contacted, Teng, an assemblyperson since 1990, defused the matter by saying that Gerakan was a democratic party.

He said he had no objections against those who wished to exercise their rights under the party constitution.

"Gerakan as a democratic party allows their members to speak out," said Teng.

However, he reminded the members to find out the real motive behind the group's agenda.

"Why did they bring the issue to the press even before they have managed to collect all the signatures they needed?" he queried.

'Not stepping down'

Teng, who was also a state executive member since 1999 until Pakatan Rakyat took over the state in 2008, said that since he took over the party's leadership, leaders have visited and dialogued with the divisions rather frequently.

"But I have never stopped any members from speaking out their views," he said.

When asked whether he will step down in the near future, Teng, who was once considered for the post of Penang chief minister, did not seem to have given it thought.

"(Stepping down is) only the view of the group, other members do not share the same view," he said.

Meanwhile, Penang Gerakan Youth chief Oh Tong Keong (right) said he preferred disputes to be resolved internally, rather than being splashed in the press.

He added that since the leadership is selected by the consensus of around 300 members, it was unnecessary to blow the matter into a big issue.

"Furthermore, asking Teng to step down before the end of his term is not fair to those who had elected him," said Oh.

"Anyway, the party leadership should listen to the grassroots; since we lost Penang in the last election, members are the most precious asset to the party," he added.

The political tsunami of 2008 dealt the party its worst electoral defeat, and Gerakan retained only two parliament seats compared to the 10 seats it had held before.

Losing its nearly four-decade hold on the state, its leaders were relegated to a rather ineffective state opposition party.

The party suffered another blow when it also lost its only cabinet post in the cabinet shuffle following the GE.

It took another cabinet reshuffle this April to include Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon - who lost his parliamentary contest in 2008 - as a minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

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