

Penang Gerakan's new line-up raises eyebrows
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Penang Gerakan chief Teng Hock Nan's newly-announced line-up for the state liaison committee today raises speculation that he is out to ensure he is surrounded by his loyalists.

Hock Nan made the announcement today at a press conference at the party's state headquarters in Jalan Macalister. He was accompanied by several members of the new state leadership.

Most notable in the line-up (2010-2011) is that state vice-chairperson Chia Kwang Chye has been dropped from the position to become a powerless central executive committee appointed central liaison officer.

A rift between Chia and Hock Nan (*third from right in pic*) widened when both were said to be vying for the post of Penang chief minister when Koh Tsu Koon, who was then acting party chairperson, moved to become a federal minister.

Another vice-chairperson, Teng Chang Yeow, who is rumoured to be unhappy with the state leadership, remains in his post.

Chang Yeow was also reportedly vying for the chief minister post. In the new line-up, the three other vice-chairpersons - OngThean Lye, Wong Mun How and Dr Lim Boon Han - are said to be Teng's loyalists.

Chang Yeow, who is the party's secretary general, was absent from the press conference today to attend a meeting in Kuala Lumpur.

When asked about his absence, Hock Nan made light of the matter, saying he did not notice Chang Yeow's absence, and asked the media why it was 'sensitive' towards the issue.

Three echelons of leadership

Hock Nan said the new line-up has taken into account the three echelons of leadership, with the first consisting of experienced members; the second, the middle-aged group who are ready to take over the leadership.

The third echelon, he added, consisted of younger members, whom the party will "nurture and train" to take over the leadership.

"We will ensure there is sustainability and continuity to prepare the party for the longer journey, especially in Penang," he said.

Hock Nan, who survived a bid to oust him during an emergency general meeting on Oct 10, said he had come up with the line-up after consultation with party leaders and the rank and file.

"After consultation, I made the decision for today's leadership list," he added.

Hock Nan said the state leadership will meet after the party's central delegates conference in Kuala Lumpur on Nov 6 and 7.

"We will meet and appoint more young members to take over the posts of bureau chiefs so they can make use of this position as a training ground," he said.

"They have to be nearer to the younger rakyat and they should be able to feel the pulse and mind of the younger generation," he added.

Meanwhile, Hock Nan said Penang Gerakan was committed to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak's 1Malaysia concept, and therefore it will ensure that the party in Penang reflects multiracial characteristics.

"We will be setting up new branches in each constituency within these three to six months - and they must reflect the 1Malaysia concept to include members who are Malays, Chinese and Indians.

"Although in ideology we are multiracial, our membership regrettably does not reflect this well," he added.

There are 40 constituencies in Penang, and Gerakan's Batu Uban branch will be the first one to be formed to reflect the 1Malaysia concept.

Teng said the new line-up was part of the party's "transformation process" and will prepare the leadership for the impending general election, speculated to be early next year.

He denied that some members may be unhappy with the line-up, saying that "everyone should be able to work together from now".

The new-line state line-up for 2010-2011 includes:

Advisor: Koh Tsu Koon

Chairperson: Teng Hock Nan

Vice-chairpersons: Ong Thean Lye, Teng Chang Yeow, Wong Mun How and Dr Lim Boon Han

Secretary: Goh Kheng Sneah

Treasurer: Ng Fook On

Women's chief: Ng Siew Lai

Youth chief: Oh Tong Keong

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