

Beng Hock row: MCA 'pushing' their luck
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The unexpected appearance of a group known as Malaysians for Beng Hock in the Galas constituency is causing a stir among the Chinese community here.

Though initially unnoticed, the group drew the attention of the locals after one of its members, Soh Cher Hai, had a brush with party central committee member Heng Saie Kie's entourage on Saturday evening.

Soh, who is the brother-in-law of the late Teoh Beng Hock, fell to the ground after being violently pushed when he tried to approach Heng who was leaving a party function.

Following this, Heng, who is deputy women, family and community development minister, vehemently denied that Soh was manhandled dismissing the incident as "an accident".

Her denial, however, has sparked anger among the local Chinese.

NONEDAP leaders today showed a series of photographs that they said prove Soh suffered an unnecessary attack.

The pictures (left), DAP Youth chief Anthony Loke said, clearly debunks Heng's claim that Soh was blocking her path.

"There was a plenty of space for Heng to move. How can she say Soh was blocking her? It was the MCA member who pushed down Soh, aggressively," Loke said.

The Rasah MP said MCA should accept responsibility and make an open apology to Soh, rather than denying the truth.

He warned that if MCA still refused to admit this, it would be punished by the voters on polling day.

DAP denies exploiting issue

Loke also denied that DAP was exploiting the death of the former political aide, stressing that members of the Malaysians for Beng Hock group came to Galas on their own initiative.

NONEHe said if at all any party should be blamed for creating an issue, it should be the MCA itself.

"After the incident, we had to step in and defend the Malaysians for Beng Hock, especially Soh, or otherwise we would have been accused of having no compassion."

DAP campaign co-ordinator Vincent Wu said the party had never printed any leaflet or poster related to Beng Hock's mysterious death for the by-election and therefore there was no question of any manipulation.

Asked whether the incident would increase Pakatan's chances in the by-election, Loke said the coalition would leave it to the people to judge.

"I hope the people will realise the hypocrisy of the MCA," he said.

Incident cause buzz in the small town

The incident on Saturday night has clearly caused some uneasiness in the small town, with some local Chinese voters starting to observe the group and their demands more closely.

This is evident based on the large number of locals present at the press conference held a day after the incident by the group to show support.

NONE Locals were also seen discussing the matter, condemning Heng and the police for arresting four members of the group later for leafletting.

Among those arrested includes Beng Hock's sister Teoh Lee Lan (seated, right), Sor and two others.

Some constituents expressed outrage over the incident and the sole newspaper that reported the incident - China Press - was sold out at local newsstands.

There are three Chinese majority areas in the Galas constituency - Kampung Baru Gua Musang, Bandar Lama and Pulai. In the last general election, PAS lost by slim majority in Pulai, while winning in the other two.

PAS believes that it won about 51 percent of the Chinese votes in the last round and hopes to increase the number to 60 percent to tide them through, due to an anticipation for a drop in Malay votes.

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