

**Controversial Gerakan book launched**  
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**Beh Lih Yi**

The launch of a new book on Gerakan proceeded as scheduled today after the Kuala Lumpur High Court dismissed a Gerakan leader's application for an injunction to stop the event.  
MCPX

non sectarian politics in malaysia the case of parti gerakan rakyat malaysia khoo kay peng neil khor jin keongThe book, 'Non-sectarian politics in Malaysia: The case of Parti Gerakan Rakyat' which was penned by Khoo Kay Peng and Dr Neil Khor ran into controversy after Gerakan's Chia Loong Thye claimed it contained defamatory words against him. Loong Thye, who is also Gerakan secretary-general Kwang Chye's younger brother, had alleged that a line from the 186-page book was "false and defamatory" and caused serious damage to his reputation.

The sentence, said to have cast aspersions on the brothers' characters, was set against the background of Loong Thye's electoral debut during the March 8 polls.

He argued that the harm he allegedly suffered was "irreparable" especially as he was a lawyer, and thus warranted the need for an injunction to be granted.

Loong Thye is a partner of leading law firm Lee Hishamuddin Allen & Gledhill.

He then sought an injunction to stop today's launch from taking place and to prevent the book from hitting the shelves.

### **Different matters**

Justice Abdul Wahab Patail, however, denied Loong Thye's bid.

The judge ruled that the politician could not rely on his legal qualifications as grounds for his applications as they were separate from his voluntary involvement in politics, according to Khor's lawyer Daphne Choy when contacted.

The decision was made after oral submissions from lawyers representing all parties during a brief session this morning.

The two authors, the book's printer and publishing firm were named as the respondents in the application for the injunction.

Contacted later, Khoo - who is the former head of Gerakan think-tank Sedar - was happy with the court's decision and said he was ready to face the politician should the latter decide to proceed with further court action.

The authors refused to comply with the requests set by Loong Thye in a letter of demand sent last Friday, which sought a full retraction of the wordings, an apology, withdrawal of the book from circulation or recall of copies already distributed.

It also demanded the cancellation of the book's launch and asked for an unspecified sum in

compensation.

### **'It's a legitimate discussion'**

Meanwhile, Loong Thye in a statement to Malaysiakini today said he agreed that the issue of non-sectarian politics in Malaysia was an "important issue and is very relevant to our present Malaysian politics".

"It is also legitimate to discuss the role of Gerakan in the context of non-sectarian politics, but why is it not possible to discuss this issue without the need to (allegedly) slander another person?"

"My complaint against the authors is just that," he said in the statement.

The book, which provided insights into Gerakan's operations, was launched by party leader Dr Toh Kin Woon, academician and author Dr Ooi Kee Beng and social activist Anwar Fazal at a hotel in Penang this afternoon.

In the March 8 polls, Loong Thye who made his election debut , lost to DAP candidate Teh Yee Cheu by 1,935 votes.

Tanjong Bungah is one of the four state seats under the Bukit Bendera parliamentary constituency, where Kwang Chye contested and was defeated by DAP newcomer Liew Chin Tong with a whopping 16,112-vote majority.

Previously, both these seats were Gerakan strongholds.

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