

Why should Ronnie Liu be sacked?

Malaysianmirror.com

26 August 2010

COMMENT The fate of veteran DAP leader Ronnie Liu hangs in the balance as the party central executive committee (CEC) meets Thursday (Aug 26) to deliberate on, among other things, the so-called Support Letters scandal implicating him.

Speculations are rife that the CEC meeting will likely be a stormy affair, with several relatively new members adamant in wanting Ronnie punished for what is simply a minor administrative blunder on the part of the Selangor state executive councillor, for which he had already been severely reprimanded publicly by the party disciplinary committee two weeks ago.

The upstart leaders, who are generally armchair political ideologists with no or very little grassroots support, are said to want to extract the pound of flesh from the popular grassroots party leader. It is expected that Jelutong MP Jeff Ooi Chuan Ann will lead the push for a stronger action, including sacking, against Ronnie, with the allegation that the senior party colleague had damaged the party image and must be made to pay heavily for it.

Contrary to the deceptive mainstream news reports, party founding elder Dr Chen Man Hin has not said anything about wanting Ronnie removed, but simply advised the besieged Pandamaran state assemblyman to act honestly according to his conscience. It is simply unfair to interpret and construe the party life advisor's statement as convoking the leadership to punish Ronnie by suspension or expulsion.

The whole shameful episode exploded in public on Tuesday, July 27, when The Star highlighted on its front page the case of a "rogue councillor" who allegedly used a state executive councillor's official letterhead and seal by writing his own letters of support to obtain contracts for his cronies and a family member. It is claimed that the Klang municipal councillor, a DAP member, had secured contracts worth more than RM1 million for 20 companies from the council where he had been serving since July 2008.

The ensuing development of what is merely an administrative lapse on the part of the executive councillor, later identified as Ronnie, was exploited to fullest by the political rivals of the DAP, especially the MCA. The sad thing is that the nouveau riche within the DAP itself, the junior sanctimonious upstart leaders, also cashed in on the scandal bandwagon to get Ronnie's influential and powerful wings clipped.

The argument of the DAP upstarts is that since the party has punished the errant municipal councillor by sacking him, Ronnie should likewise be served with an expulsion order. Such a contention does not hold water as Ronnie is in fact a victim of a treacherous aide's betrayal of trust, and not the contriver of the whole fiasco.

DAP national chairman Karpal Singh's directive to party leaders and members to refrain from commenting on the issue is not without a good and valid reason. The veteran party elder does not want any of the careless desultory comments or statements to cause more damage to the party.

The DAP cannot afford the luxury of intra-party battles at this time, in view of the impending Battle for Putrajaya at the next general election, anticipated to be held sometime in the middle of next year, or even earlier.

So, it would be judicious for whoever in the CEC who want to fix Ronnie to exercise some wisdom and foresight to consider the magnitude of removing the popular grassroots leader over a very insignificant minor shortcoming.

The consequence and implication of such a drastic action now will bounce back to haunt the party at the Battle of Putrajaya. — MySinChew.com

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