

Zaid burning his bridges with PKR
Malaysianmirror.com
21 September 2010

It looks like the writing is on the wall for Zaid Ibrahim, who joined PKR last year amid huge fanfare. Already, the word on the grapevine is that he may resign either out of ill-will or disgruntlement or even to avoid being sacked for indiscipline. But whichever door he exits through, it is clear it will be extremely difficult for him to stay on in the party that had pinned such high hopes on him.

His sympathizers say it is a waste of talent but few would deny he asked for it. The cause of his downfall in PKR – his rivalry with vice president Azmin Ali that has turned uncontrollable to the extent that he has publicly ridiculed his own party and its de-facto head, Anwar Ibrahim.

“We would like to help but we can’t reach him. Not physically but mentally. He appears to have hit the self-destruct button whether on his own or on the advice of those close to him. He is no longer communicating with the top leaders nor does he seem to be in sync with the party’s aspirations at all,” PKR strategic director Tian Chua told *Malaysia Chronicle*.

“We were shocked when he accused PKR of being a second Umno. When you are angry and you want to wake up the party, we can still understand. But this was to gain advantage for himself against Azmin. For me, this is not acceptable. Like it or not, we are a party and we sink or float together. Whether Zaid realizes it or not, the impression he has given is that he is completely intent on being No. 2 so much so that he seems to have lost all sense of judgment or proportion.”

Loose canon

Tian is not the only one who has spoken out against Zaid. Many PKR members are starting to realize that Zaid has feet of clay after all. They are bewildered by his latest statement that he will be a loyal deputy to president Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, while in the same breath, he hit out at Anwar.

Despite the cloaked words, they smelt an insult directed at both Wan Azizah and Anwar. To them, it now appears that Zaid may not be just an over-enthusiastic contestant for the No.2 post but could instead be harboring grand ambitions of taking over PKR, and they don’t like it.

Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.

Nik Nazmi - among those who have spoken out

“Too often do I hear that Wan Azizah is not the real leader. Some say she has no power. This happens because some party leaders don’t respect the position of party president. “(Some of these) leaders are more comfortable giving their full trust in the de facto leader. I, too, trust and fully support Anwar, because he is the party founder and opposition leader. But in the party structure, he is just an ordinary member,” Zaid had said in his blog.

His comments drew immediate fire from communications director Nik Nazmi Nik Ahmad, who blasted him for indiscipline and disrespect towards Anwar and PKR as a whole.

“Now, the latest gimmick is to return the president’s power. Hopefully he will also have more organisational discipline and collective responsibility,” said Nik Nazmi on his Twitter

page.

"If only he checked with the members who were at the 2007 PKR congress who understood why the exceptional position was created for Anwar. I forgot - he (Zaid) was still in Umno at the time. Now he criticises Umno culture! Well done."

Casting a cloud on PKR polls

In 2007, Anwar was in a three-corner fight for the party presidency against Wan Azizah and Abdul Rahman Othman. Anwar and Abdul Rahman later withdrew, paving the way for Wan Azizah to win uncontested. The Opposition Leader did so after he was warned that he would be in violation of the Societies Act 1966, which prohibits anyone who has been in jail in the preceding 5 years from holding a party post. Anwar was only freed from jail in 2004.

Zaid's over-ambitiousness has also cast a cloud over the PKR polls, which many members had looked forward to with pride because it is the first time that a political party of its size in Malaysia has ever allowed each of its members to decide whom they wanted to lead their party.

Despite the attacks launched by Zaid against Azmin, he has not garnered as many nominations as he may have wished. His score of 19 is about half of Azmin's 39. Another vice president Mustaffa Kamil Ayub has 6 nominations while Tian has 2, elections director Fuziah Salleh and Selangor Mentri Besar Khalid Ibrahim have one each.

In PKR, Zaid is seen as aligned to Sabah vice president Jeffrey Kitingan. Jeffrey has also been unhappy with Anwar and Azmin. So too are businessman Soh Chee Wen and former secretary-general Salehuddin Hashim, who have already fallen out with Anwar.

Many PKR members believe the four – Soh, Salehuddin, Jeffrey and Zaid - have grouped together to seize the party from Anwar and Wan Azizah. Some have even accused the four men of being BN moles. Zaid and Salehuddin are former Umno members, while Jeffrey was a former BN leader and Soh was once with MCA.

The only divisions that have not cast their nominations yet are in Selangor, Johor, Sarawak and the Federal Territories. These will do so next weekend onwards. Closing date for nominations is on Oct 3. Voting takes place from Oct 29 to Nov 21. The results will be announced on Nov 27.

Copyright © 2009 www.malaysiamirror.com

Source : <http://www.malaysianmirror.com/media-buzz-detail/41-opinion/49440>