

Selangor DAP election a strong message to central leadership?
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KUALA LUMPUR - The just-concluded Selangor DAP election has sent a strong signal that grassroots members want more checks and balances in the state leadership.

Despite strong campaigning by two rival factions, more than 1,000 delegates decided to vote for representatives from both camps into the 15-member committee.

Team Unity, headed by senior state executive councillor and Kinrara assemblyman Teresa Kok, saw seven of its candidates making the cut while Selangor State Assembly Speaker Teng Chang Khim's Rainbow team clinched five seats.

Kok, who finished 11th, was made state chairman while another key DAP leader in the state and state executive councillor Ronnie Liu was booted out.

Three neutral candidates -- Janice Lee, Hannah Yeoh and Charles Santiago -- secured the top three places.

DAP central executive committee member Jeff Ooi said the new leadership should take note of the wishes of the grassroots who wanted more checks and balances in the state leadership.

"The grassroots has sent a strong message that Teresa Kok needs more time to build up her political base in the state. Some may still be sceptical of her, particularly on time management," said the blogger-turned member of parliament for Jelutong.

He said Kok, whose team was supported by the central leadership, had a tremendous task before her, adding that grassroots members were still annoyed over her role in the sacking of former Selangor DAP organising secretary Tee Boon Hock.

"The sacking has left some unanswered questions and this was reflected in the outcome of the result," Ooi said in giving his personal assessment on the matter.

Ooi said Liu's defeat was also "a big lesson for the central leadership" which had supported the status-quo in the state leadership, but which the grassroots thought otherwise.

"The top five are not from the unity team. The central leadership should take note," he said.

Despite Liu's setback, Ooi said he did not believe there would be changes to the state exco line-up as he still enjoyed the backing of the top national leaders.

Klang MP Santiago said it was clear that both sides were equally represented as the members wanted to strengthen the state DAP.

"It's not 10 to 3, 12 to 3. So, the voice of the delegates was to strengthen the state DAP. It's clear that they need to work together," he said when contacted.

Furthermore, he said, Kok was elected as chairman during the second tier of the election, with a majority of just one vote.

However, whether there is a change or not, UCSI University's political analyst Ong Kian Ming said the question of Liu's status would remain, at least for sometime.

"My sense is that his position may be untenable, given these election results. The question then would be, who should replace him," he said.

Judging by the number of votes received, Ong said one would choose Jenice Lee, the Teratai state representative, but where seniority is taken into consideration, Ng Suee Lim, the Sekinchan assemblyman, could be the choice.

"Of the two, choosing Ng will be the better 'strategic' option, given that it will boost his chances of retaining his seat. It has 56 per cent Chinese voters and he won with a majority 190 votes in 2008," he said. - Bernama

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