

Boo taking on foes within DAP and PKR

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Johor DAP chief said to be undermined by 'old school' faction leaders

DR Boo Cheng Hau speaks fluent Bahasa Malaysia and is known to be friendly with a Barisan Nasional assemblyman.

He demonstrated his multiracial credentials by broaching the idea that more non-Chinese should be fielded in the 13th general election. His critics, on the other hand, believe DAP stands a good chance of increasing its parliamentary seats by presenting an all-Chinese election cast in the "Chinese constituencies".

Although Dr Boo, Johor DAP chairman, knows a thing or two about bouncing back, having lost in Skudai to Gerakan's Teo Kok Chee in 2004 and winning the last time around, the question is: will he triumph over his foes in DAP, and also in its supposed ally, Parti Keadilan Rakyat (PKR)?

Of late, he has been taking on his DAP and PKR rivals through his speeches as well as blog and Facebook postings.

There seems to be a wider political play.

Sources within DAP said Dr Boo had been under a lot of pressure as "he is being systematically undermined by certain party leaders from the party headquarters in Kuala Lumpur via their proxies in Johor".

These leaders, said to be from the "old school" faction of DAP, felt that Dr Boo was getting too powerful in Johor and "may soon pose a threat to them at the national level".

Bentayan assemblyman Gwee Tiong Hiang, who had openly displayed his independence from Dr Boo's leadership, was said to be one of them.

In October, the DAP disciplinary committee suspended Gwee and several of his supporters after they were found to have misused party funds.

Dr Boo was said to have the strong backing of leaders such as Bakri member of parliament Er Teck Hwa, who has a long standing rivalry with Gwee, and Johor DAP secretary Tan Chen Choon.

Tan contested the Bentayan seat in 2004 but lost. He was replaced by Gwee in 2008.

With demarcations of factions getting obvious, Gwee's allies were said to include Senai assemblyman Ong Kow Meng.

Dr Boo's insistence on a multiracial election cast had triggered the spat between him and Johor PKR chief Datuk Chua Jui Meng two months ago.

The anti-Dr Boo faction also believes that Dr Boo is trying to place his own supporters as candidates while sidelining those who oppose him, including the likes of Gwee and Ong. It is no secret that the "mini demonstration" by party members against him in Muar on Sunday was their "work".

The sniping at Dr Boo will continue right up to the day when DAP names its election candidates, and possibly beyond that, too.

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Source: <http://www.nst.com.my/local/politics/boo-taking-on-foes-within-dap-and-pkr-1.17302>