

Guan Eng tells Karpal to resolve squabble within DAP
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By Clara Chooi

KUALA LUMPUR, March 19 — DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng sought today to cool down the protracted spat between Karpal Singh and Dr P. Ramasamy by appealing to the party chairman to keep the squabble within the party.

Lim warned that a public spat could threaten party unity and make the DAP vulnerable to its political foes in the Barisan Nasional (BN).

“He has not discussed this... this is the first time we are hearing about his concerns.

“We want to appeal to him to use party channels... I hope that party channels are used first and that before it is even discussed, it should not be publicised because I am sure it would give our opponents many opportunities to take advantage (of the situation) and create a lot of misinterpretation,” he told a press conference in George Town, Penang.

Lim said he and other party leaders will seek a meeting with Karpal over the next few days to discuss the long drawn-out spat that started some time last year.

He said it was the shared sentiment of all DAP members that the matter should be resolved internally and not in the public sphere.

“We hope party leaders and our supporters can support this basic principle that when it comes to internal matters, the first opportunity for resolution should rest within party confines,” he said.

At a press conference yesterday, Karpal (picture) reportedly lashed out at the party’s disciplinary committee for clearing his arch-nemesis Ramasamy on accusations that he had breached party discipline last December when he led a demonstration against DAP leaders.

According to various media reports, Karpal had held that the four-man committee, led by its chairman Tan Kok Wai, was unfit to hear the case as it involved Ramasamy, who is also a panel member.

The veteran politician said the four should have excused themselves from the case and new members should have been appointed in their place.

“The proceeding should be void ab initio (from the beginning) and the three should not judge one of their own.

“The seed of destruction was already in the panel, in the form of being able to judge (one of their own).

“In this case, I think all three should have disclosed their interest and stepped down. Let other people hear the case,” he was quoted as saying in The Star today.

Karpal and Ramasamy, who is also a DAP deputy secretary-general, first came to loggerheads with one another last year when the latter purportedly listed himself and three others as candidates for the coming general election. This riled Karpal, who shot back at Ramasamy for making such a decision when it was not his place to do so.

In the ensuing verbal warfare between the duo, Karpal labelled Ramasamy a "warlord", while the latter responded with a "godfather" tag on the former.

During the party's state convention last December, a group of protestors claiming to be in support of Ramasamy held a demonstration, leading to a complaint filed by 33 members against the Penang deputy chief minister II with the disciplinary committee.

The committee however cleared Ramasamy of the charges on March 12, saying there was no direct evidence to prove his involvement in the protest.

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