

'Warning from PM's office on DAP's deregistration no joke'

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By Minderjeet Kaur

Klang MP Charles Santiago says it is a 'clear warning' that DAP is being watched.

PETALING JAYA: DAP lawmaker Charles Santiago says the latest warning from the Prime Minister's Office on deregistering the party should be taken seriously.

He said such statements were largely due to DAP members raising issues on 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) and Felda Global Ventures, which were rattling the prime minister.

"It's a kind of punch to your face," the Klang MP said.

"The letter comes from the Prime Minister's Office. It is a clear warning. Simply put, they are saying: 'We are watching you and we are coming after you.'

"Such a response from the Prime Minister's Office represents the PM's own interests. It is not coming from any minister. It is coming from the Prime Minister's Office," he told FMT.

Santiago was asked to comment on DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang who today told party members to prepare for the possibility that the party may be banned and its logo disallowed in the upcoming general election (GE14).

Kit Siang said contingency plans included DAP candidates using the Pakatan Harapan logo if the opposition coalition's logo could be registered in time for GE14, due by August next year.

On July 1, Prime Minister Najib Razak's press secretary Tengku Sariffuddin Tengku Ahmad claimed DAP did not know if it would be allowed to use its party logo in GE14 as the Registrar of Societies (RoS) had not recognised the validity of the party's central executive committee (CEC).

Santiago said Tengku Sariffuddin is seen as the person who goes after those Najib is upset with.

He said at the end of the day, it was all about politics and "survival".

"I think they have tried many ways to demonise DAP, stating it is the backbone of Pakatan Harapan and it is Chinese-led."

He added that attempts to demonise Kit Siang and Bagan MP Lim Guan Eng were not working.

“Therefore, the government is getting more desperate.”

Yesterday, DAP legal bureau chairman Gobind Singh Deo said Tengku Sariffuddin had gotten his facts wrong as the matter had already been cleared in court in 2014. He also questioned the authority of the prime minister’s secretary to speak on behalf of the RoS.

Gobind said the RoS had recognised that DAP’s CEC may carry out all its powers, functions and duties in accordance with DAP’s constitution.

Ipoh Barat MP M Kulasegaran meanwhile said Tengku Sariffuddin’s conduct showed that “the cat is out of the bag on what they plan to do”.

He said the RoS’ action was uncalled for, adding that it was a way of preventing DAP from taking part in GE14.

“There is a political conspiracy to prevent the iconic DAP symbol from being used in the election. The rocket symbol is one of the reasons we have been winning.

“If Umno is confident of winning the general election, it must take us on and not use dirty tactics.

“If the RoS deregisters us, it will be too late for us to take the matter to court.”

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