

DAP to PM's aide: Don't de-register, fight us in the polls

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DAP seeks meeting with Ahmad Zahid Hamidi to clear the air over "old" issue of non-recognition of party's top leadership by RoS.

GEORGE TOWN: The "sudden revival" of DAP's de-registration issue is likely due to a party member's article that Prime Minister Najib Razak's increasing "isolation" in Umno forced him to delay the general election, DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng said today.

Lim said the prime minister's press secretary Tengku Sariffuddin Tengku Ahmad's rebuttal of DAP's Kluang MP Liew Chin Tong's opinion piece by bringing up an already settled issue was clearly retaliatory.

Lim also took a swipe at Tengku Sariffuddin for usurping the powers of the home minister by saying the DAP was at risk of de-registration by the Registrar of Societies (RoS).

RoS, which regulates societies and political parties, comes under the Home Ministry.

"(If) you (BN) want to beat us fair and square in elections, do not de-register us before we can even stand in elections.

"The way he (Tengku Sariffuddin) talks, it is as if he is the minister of home affairs. We condemn the press secretary for trying to use the de-registration issue because he had lost the argument," Lim said at a press conference here.

Liew recently wrote that Najib had overplayed his hand against rivals within Umno, causing strife in the party which forced him to defer the national polls planned for later this year.

Tengku Sariffuddin hit back in a statement yesterday by describing Liew's analysis about Najib as "fake news" and telling Liew to focus on DAP's "invalid" central executive committee (CEC).

Tengku Sariffuddin also said Lim's position as secretary-general was unlawful since RoS had not recognised the CEC's validity.

Lim said he had written to Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Ahmad Zahid Hamidi on the matter, and was looking forward to a meeting to "clear the air".

“I am willing to meet DPM to clear the air over this dishonest attempt to de-register DAP.

“Zahid had asked us to stop speculating (on DAP’s situation) but we are not the ones speculating.

“The one who started it is the PM’s press secretary, so we hope Zahid can advise the press secretary not to speculate and also not assume the power of the home minister,” Lim said.

On April 17, 2013, just three weeks before the 13th general election (GE13), the RoS sent a letter to DAP stating that the party’s new CEC was not recognised due to a dispute over the party elections.

However, the RoS issued another letter on April 19 allowing the party to use its rocket symbol in the election.

On Jan 22, 2014, Lim sought a judicial review on the decision of the RoS, arguing that the agency had no power under the Societies Act 1966 to refuse to recognise the CEC formed after a re-election on Sept 29, 2013.

DAP dropped the application on Sept 23, 2014 following the RoS’ recognition of the re-constituted CEC and its stand that statements on the matter were merely advice and not legally binding.

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