

BN reps back 2 per family council rule

The Star - 28/10/2006

PETALING JAYA: Barisan Nasional component parties in Selangor will have no problem adhering to the "two in the family" councillor quota if the motion is brought to, and passed at, the state assembly.

The MCA, MIC and Gerakan have internal party mechanisms to ensure leaders unrelated by blood have a chance to be councillors.

All three parties are given allocations to put their representatives in the local councils.

"For the MCA, we have a policy discouraging family members from being councillors at the same time in the same

council," said Selangor MCA vice-president Datuk Tang See Hang, who is also a state executive councillor.

He added there had been cases in the past when the names of family members were submitted to the state liaison committee for consideration to be councillors by virtue of their standing as leaders in the division.

"However, we always advise against it. It is also a matter of image, we must be fair, and be seen to be fair," Tang said when commenting on a recent statement by Selangor Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir

Toyo that no more than two members of a family would be allowed to be councillors in the same local authority at the same time.

Dr Khir added the decision on family participation would be brought up to the various parties and the state assembly soon.

MIC information chief Senator M. Saravanan said the MIC never had members of the same family sitting as councillors at the same time in the same council.

"Places are already limited. Why should one family have so many places? There are many

capable leaders to select from," he said.

Selangor Gerakan vice-chairman Datuk Dr Lim Thuang Seng said it boiled down to a matter of morality, although the current administration system allowed for family members to participate in party elections.

"Say a husband and wife team wins at the party division elections. By virtue of their standing, the system allows them to be nominated as councillors.

"However, the family and the party should think about the moral position ... whether it is

right to have so many family members in the same council when there are other capable leaders deserving a chance to serve as well," said Dr Lim, also a state exco member.

Dr Lim added that the Gerakan also had an internal mechanism to ensure family members did not fill the limited government-administration seats offered to the party.

Selangor opposition chief Teng Chang Khim said instead of worrying about how many

family members to put in the same council, Dr Khir should do the right thing by appointing councillors strictly by criteria set out under Section 10 of the Local Government Act.

"The Act clearly states what matters most is whether the councillors are experienced and professionals in their different capacities to offer quality service to the people.

"The Act does not mention party positions as a criteria," said Teng.