

10 JUL 2002
MCA-Elections
SIGNIFICANT BY-ELECTIONS, WORLD WAITS OUTCOME- MCA

IPOH, July 10 (Bernama) -- The Anak Bukit and Pendang by-elections are very significant as victories for the Barisan Nasional will send a clear message to the world that Malaysia remains a progressive and tolerant Muslim country, MCA vice-president Datuk Chan Kong Choy said.

Chan said Malaysia had been hailed as a tolerant Muslim country after the Sept 11 attacks on the United States and since then Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's views had been sought after by many world leaders.

Victory for PAS candidates in the two seats, however, would send a wrong signal to the world as the party had been associated with extremism, he said.

"So, not only are Malaysians eagerly awaiting the outcome of the by-elections but also the international community," he said after attending the Ipoh Timur MCA division and Pasir Putih Selatan branch solidarity dinner here last night.

The by-elections are being held following the death of PAS President Datuk Fadzil Noor on June 23. He was the MP for Pendang and the state assemblyman for Anak Bukit.

Chan said it was even more significant as the seats were previously held by the PAS President while the by-elections were also taking place just after the Hudud Law Bill had been passed by the PAS-controlled Terengganu State Assembly.

The MCA, he said, would mobilise its entire machinery and send experienced speakers to both constituencies to help the BN candidates wrest the seats.

Chan said although Chinese comprised only 6.4 per cent and 11.09 per cent of the voters in Pendang and Anak Bukit respectively, their votes were nevertheless crucial for the BN victory.

"We will go all out to deliver the majority of the Chinese votes to the BN. As far as we are concerned, the Chinese will be with us but we will not underestimate PAS's influence in the area," he added.

Chan said there were not many issues that could be capitalised upon by PAS to capture Chinese votes.

He said the economic recovery and the latest developments on the world scenario would help swing votes to the BN.

-- BERNAMA
AR AR AAM