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MCA-Election

MCA TO RENOMINATE MOST OF THE INCUMBENTS IN COMING GENERAL ELECTION

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 19 (Bernama) -- The MCA will renominate most of the old faces in the party to contest in the coming general election, its deputy president, Datuk Chan Kong Choy, said today.

Chan, who is chairman of the MCA Election Committee, said that the party's decision to retain the incumbents and to nominate some new faces was not unusual.

"We don't change for the sake of changing. If changes were to be made, there ought to be reasons for doing so.

"There are some who wish to step down voluntarily, there are state assemblymen and MPs who have served for a long time and there are some who have already indicated to the top leadership that they wish to retire," he told reporters after sending off Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who left for Bangkok to attend the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (Apec) 2003, at the Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF) station in Subang near here.

Asked how many new faces will be nominated to contest in the general election, Chan said: "We really can't tell, we're still in the process of identifying the potential candidates.

"To what extent, how many new faces will be nominated and things like that, there's no final decision yet. We're still at the stage of identifying all these."

In the last general election in 1999, the MCA contested 35 parliamentary and 75 state seats. It won 28 of the parliamentary seats and 68 state seats.

However, three days later, the MCA obtained two additional seats when Penang Gerakan's Lim Boo Chang (Datuk Keramat) and Lim Chin Aun (Bayan Lepas) joined the party.

Asked how many old faces have expressed their wish to retire and asked not to be renominated, Chan said that the number was small.

He said that the MCA was also expected to be allotted new constituencies following the redelineation exercise and this necessitated the party to identify more candidates.

Chan said: "Even though we have yet to be informed of the new constituencies to be allotted to us, we have made early preparations like identifying potential candidates."

Among the MCA elected representatives who have indicated that they are not defending their seats is former MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik who has held the Labis parliamentary seat since 1986.

Asked on the progress of the party's election preparations, Chan said that all liaison committees at state, division and branch levels had been instructed to set up their election operations centre by the end of the month.

The MCA Election Committee will later conduct an internal audit to ensure that everything was ready to face the general election.

"Besides that, all the divisions have been instructed to identify the problems with the local and state and federal governments and submit to the Central Committee for solution.

"We hope when the government decides to have the election, we are fully prepared," he said.

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