

No GE in first quarter of 2011, says Chua
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The news that all BN MPs will meet Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak on Saturday had set the rumour mill buzzing that the 13th general election is around the corner.

However, MCA president Chua Soi Lek today claimed that it will not happen in the first quarter of 2011, stressing that the meeting is nothing special.

"No, this is just speculation. The prime minister meets MP quite often. Before Parliament convene in every session, the prime minister will meet the MPs.

"So if you ask me, I say there will be no general election as speculated in the first quarter of this year. I don't feel it," said Chua (left) during a press conference at the MCA headquarter today.

He was responding to a question whether the meeting between Najib and MPs signals that snap polls is imminent.

However Chua refused to speculate whether the general election will be held this year.

"That one I really don't know," he answered with a smile.

Najib, who is also the BN chairperson, will meet all 136 BN MPs this Saturday. Some quarters speculated that the meeting is to collect feedback from the lawmakers before calling an early general election.

During the press conference, Chua also urged all MCA leaders to stop "wasting time" in speculating about the date of the general election.

"They should spend all their time working and preparing themselves for the general election."

Identifying candidates

To another question on whether MCA had identified its 130 parliamentary and state candidates to stand in the next general election, Chua said it is a continuous process.

"We continue to identify... It keeps on changing because one day you feel that he is good, what about three months after that you find that he is not working?"

"Like in Kluang I couldn't identify anybody as yet. I'm very frank," said Chua, poking fun at Kluang MP-cum-Deputy Higher Education Minister Hou Kok Chung who sat beside him during the press conference.

The press conference was to announce that the 1Malaysia cultural award organised by MCA is ready to accept nominations.

Cash awards of RM50,000 will be given to winners who have made significant contributions

and commitments towards national integration in line with the spirit of 1Malaysia.

All Malaysian individuals or groups involved in drama, literature, film, music or art can be nominated for the award which will be given away by Najib himself.

"This shows that 1Malaysia is not a political slogan. Only those with a narrow mindsets would relate 1Malaysia with politics. This (award) proves that it has no political element at all," said Chua.

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