

**Six deputy ministers appointed 'foster fathers'**  
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The MCA has appointed six deputy ministers from the party as 'foster fathers' of the Chinese community in Labis, Johor in the run-up to the Tenang state by-election.

They are Wee Ka Siong (Deputy Education Minister) (right), Donald Lim Siang Chai (Finance), Lee Chee Leong (Home), Gan Ping Sieu (Youths and Sports), Chua Tee Yeong (Agriculture and Agro-base Industry) and Heng Seai Kie (Women, Family and Community Development).

MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek said their appointments were aimed at bolstering BN's support in the by-election.

"We will ensure that party leaders, both from the central and state levels, would work hard to ensure BN's victory in the by-election," he told reporters after the party's central committee meeting at Wisma MCA in Kuala Lumpur today.

The by-election for the Tenang state seat will be held on Jan 30, with nomination day on Jan 22.

**Complaints received**

Chua added he had received complaints that certain headmasters and teachers had allegedly discouraged or refused to allow students from taking up Mandarin in the Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia (SPM) examination.

"It was an uncalled for attitude as the headmasters and teachers should have encouraged students to do so," he added.

On an uproar over the use of certain words in 'Interlok', a required text for Malay Literature in the SPM, he said the critics should look at the implicit message in the novel.

"We must see this book from a proper perspective... it is a historical novel based on racial integration in early 1900s.

"Certain words may be sensitive in the present context, but the book depicts an important message, on how to promote harmony among people of different races," he said.

- Bernama