

**Soi Lek zooms in on PAS to woo Chinese votes**  
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MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek again adopted his party's usual modus operandi in warning the Chinese community about PAS' Islamic state agenda ahead of the Tenang polls.

This time, however, Chua warns about the potential signals which the Chinese community would send to other communities should they be found voting for the Islamic party.

"If we vote for PAS, we are telling the Malays that we can accept the nation to be ruled according to Islam," he told the committee members of the San Ti Shu Thai Buddhist temple in Labis today.

"If you can accept lifestyle that follow Islamic values, then you vote for PAS, as simple as that," he added.

It is uncertain why Chua (left) singled out the Malay community, but it is likely that he is implying that Muslims - who are politically split between nationalist Umno and the opposition - can be influenced into supporting PAS' cause by the Chinese community.

Chinese voters make up a substantial 39 percent of the 14,753 voters in Tenang. During the 2008 general elections, slightly over half of them voted for PAS.

Pakatan Rakyat is expected to put in extra effort to secure more votes from the Chinese community in a bid to reduce BN's overall majority.

But Chua is also under pressure to ensure the BN fares better among the Chinese voters because he is an influential figure in the area as he was formerly the MP from the constituency.

**'PAS candidate doesn't even shake hands'**

On BN's chances, Chua conceded that the coalition and Umno, which is representing the coalition for the Tenang by-election, both have weaknesses just like the opposition.

"Umno is not perfect. It has corruption. But PAS is also not perfect. You need to look at (PAS-ruled) Kelantan. If you have friends in Kelantan, ask them about it.

"It's just that PAS is not the federal government thus they don't have large-scale corruption," he said.

Chua also acknowledged that the late Tenang assemblyperson Sulaiman Taha was relatively unknown to the Chinese community here and might dampen BN's chances now.

However, he stressed that PAS was even more alien to the Chinese community and the candidate's practices would not be accepted.

"She will not come here (a Chinese temple), she doesn't even shake hands with the people. I have received complaints about this.

"She is like (PKR de facto leader) Anwar Ibrahim's wife (Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail). She wears gloves when she shakes hands. If you can accept this kind of Islamic value, go ahead and vote for PAS," added Chua.

Chua will visit eight Chinese temples and religious associations today to understand their problems and campaign for BN candidate Azahar Ibrahim. He aims to visit all 27 temples in Tenang in three days.

### **MCA fully backs candidate**

Although there was rumour that some MCA grassroots preferred Labis Umno Wanita chief Haslinda Salleh over Azahar (left) as candidate, Chua stressed that MCA will accept whoever decided by Umno.

"In the spirit of BN, we always accept whoever is decided. This is to ensure all component parties will work as a team. We respect Umno choice in the same way when we decide on a MCA (candidate), Umno and the rest of the component parties will also accept.

"That's how we keep BN alive and working as a team and we don't quarrel openly over candidate over the last 53 years. We are not like Pakatan which continuously fights among themselves in the state they rule."

He said Azahar, a former assistant district officer, has vast administrative experience in local authority which is a plus point that could help the residents resolve local woes.

"He is young and energetic and I understand that he is well accepted by the Malay community," he said.

Asked whether MCA campaign will get more difficult as Azahar is not popular among the Chinese community, Chua said the same goes to PAS.

"No, I don't think the Malay lady is also well known among the Chinese. So you should throw back the same question to PAS," he said, referring to PAS candidate, Normala Sudirman (left).