

**Organiser contends Lim-Chua debate not racial**  
**MalaysiaKini.com**  
**February 17,2012**  
**Leven Woon**

As temperatures rise in anticipation of tomorrow's showdown between DAP secretary-general Lim Guan Eng and MCA president Chua Soi Lek, some have criticised the debate as being racially biased.

However, the organiser, Asian Strategy and Leadership Institute (Asli) denied the debate is designed for a particular ethnic community.

The debate with the topic 'Chinese at the crossroads: Is two-party system becoming a two-race system?' is the highlight of the day-long conference.

Asli chief executive officer Michael Yeoh (right) said the topic for the first session of the conference is about Malaysia's changing political landscape, which affects all ethnic groups.

"There is nothing racial about the conference. Every ethnic group needs to have better democracy and civil society," Yeoh told a press conference in Kuala Lumpur this morning.

"It is only that the debate is going to be conducted in Chinese, but that is upon the request of the Penang chief minister," he added.

Despite that, the audience are welcome to pose questions to the speakers in English.

On Lim's suggestion to have a follow-up debate in Bahasa Malaysia and English, Yeoh said Asli would be happy to organise it.

"But let's wait until tomorrow's event is done and successful, then we can talk about the next session," added Asli's senior vice-president Ng Yen Seen (right).

Ng said Lim and Chua would be given eight minutes each to state their views on the given topic, followed by a question from the moderator.

The audience will be given three minutes to pose their questions, followed by cross-questioning between the two speakers and their closing remarks.

Also, additional space will be opened up to accommodate 50 more seats, making the total number of seats available to the public at 250. The seats allocated for MCA and DAP supporters remain unchanged at 200 for each party.

The debate will be broadcast live from Berjaya Times Square on Astro AEC and YouTube, while a big screen will also be placed outside the venue.

Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak is slated to officiate the conference, which will feature prominent speakers from both sides of the political divide, such as Gerakan president Koh Tsu Koon, DAP deputy chairperson Tan Seng Giaw and Deputy Education Minister Wee Ka Siong.

The political conference is scheduled to start at 9.30am and the Lim-Chua debate at 5pm.