

## **Will Soi Lek break promise and seek re-election?**

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**By Lee Way Loon**

INTERVIEW As speculation mounts that MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek may break his promise to not to seek re-election in the MCA elections in December, one of his confidants too has "no clue" as to whether Chua will defend his post.

Former MCA national organising secretary Tee Siew Kiong, who was also a former political secretary to Chua and is still seen as a "right hand man" to the MCA president, said it was very difficult to make predictions in politics.

NONE "In politics, you cannot judge something until the last minute. I, too, didn't expect I would be appointed as a state executive councillor after the last general election," Tee told Malaysiakini and KiniTV in an exclusive interview last week.

He said this when asked whether Chua (right) would honour his word not to seek re-election as MCA president in the coming party election - or whether he would change his mind and defend his post.

One day after the May 5 general election (GE13), Chua announced that he will not seek re-election as MCA president.

Earlier this month, Chua was quoted by the Chinese press as saying that he had never made a stand on the matter, fuelling speculation he may break his promise and seek re-election.

However, the MCA president has since clarified that he did not make such a comment to the Chinese press.

Asked about the party elections, Tee said Chua could still lead the party, despite the MCA's heavy losses in the recent concluded GE13.

"The current leadership has no problem, even if Chua continues to lead the party. We just need to make sure that we have to work together to achieve our targets," Tee said.

NONE He agrees with his party colleague and MCA vice-president Gan Ping Sieu that MCA needs a valiant chief to end its debacle.

However, Tee (left) refused to comment when asked whether party deputy

president Liow Tiong Lai would be the suitable person to lead the MCA.

Liow had announced on July 20 that he will go for the top post in December party election, which will be a crucial election for the Chinese-based party after the heavy losses it suffered in GE13.

Lessons to learn from Chinese cosmology

Commenting on MCA's humiliating GE13 losses, Tee said this may be a pendulum effect, as indicated in the classic Chinese book on cosmology and philosophy, 'I Ching'.

"We Chinese believe in the I Ching. Good things always come with bad things, and when you reach the height you will soon fall to the bottom. We just need to learn how to turn things around," he said.

Tee, who is also Pulai Sebatang assemblyperson, was suspended for three years by MCA for defying the party's stand and accepting the Johor executive council post.

MCA Youth chief Wee Ka Siong questioned Tee's acceptance of the post on grounds that there were other elected representatives who could represent the Chinese in the Johor exco.

However, Johor ruler Sultan Ibrahim Ismail Sultan Iskandar called on all quarters, including the MCA, to stop questioning the appointment of Tee as it was the power of the sultan to make the appointment.

'We can't control people's mouths'

Asked about the criticism he faced from his own party for taking up the exco post, Tee said he would ignore this and continue to do his work.

"I always believe that we cannot close people's mouths or stop them from criticising you. But we can control our ears," he said.

He reiterated that he had to accept the Johor exco post as he could not go against the sultan.

However, he questioned whether his three-year suspension from the party was a personal agenda for some in the coming party election.

Asked who was behind this move, he said "I think you know more than me, right?"

Tee has filed an appeal against his suspension but is yet to receive any reply from the party. However, he said he was not disappointed by the suspension.

"If you are disappointed with everything, you may get heart attack, high blood pressure and even cancer," he quipped.

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