

**Use Kajang as acid test, Soi Lek tells MCA**  
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INTERVIEW Accusing the top MCA leaders of lying about widespread support for its move to rejoin the federal cabinet, former MCA president Dr Chua Soi Lek today went on to challenge MCA to test this out in the Kajang by-election.

Chua said re-joining the cabinet was a "self-serving" move to make MCA's newly-minted president Liow Tiong Lai a government minister.

Expressing scepticism that this would bring Chinese voters back to MCA, Chua dared the party's leaders to put its proposition to the people.

"This is the greatest 'bluffology' I have ever seen," Chua said in an interview with Malaysiakini and The Malaysian Insider.

"If 95 percent support something (as claimed in Perak), don't you think it's suspicious? It's overwhelming... it's frightening.

"Why is that so? If the president is honest, it is not the overwhelming response, it is the central delegates who can't be bothered (to oppose it)."

MCA central committee (CC) member Mah Hang Soon said the CC had organised a nationwide signature drive to garner support to urge the party leadership to hold the EGM and in Perak, 95 percent of the members supported the move.

According to the party constitution, an EGM can be called by either the president, or upon receiving support from two-thirds of the CC members, or on the backing of two-thirds of the party's central delegates.

Also today, MCA secretary-general Ong Ka Chuan (left) announced that the party has received the backing of 1,932 or 81.8 percent of the central delegates to call for the EGM in order to decide whether MCA should accept government post at all three levels.

The matter would be discussed by MCA central committee tomorrow.

It is widely speculated that the EGM will be held on Feb 23 in conjunction with the party's founding anniversary.

Chua vehemently opposes the 3-in-1 vote for MCA to rejoin BN governments in local, state and federal levels.

He noted that MCA members had already decided on the matter at the EGM that was held in October last year, when he was MCA president.

The party then voted to take up local and state government positions but not at the federal level, Chua said.

Therefore, this EGM should be just voting on whether the party should accept minister and deputy minister posts, which he believes many members would still oppose.

'A very old lie that should not be repeated'

"When they bundle together, the chances of support are higher. Everybody in the MCA can see it, can see that the president is in a hurry to become a minister... even the people outside can see it," Chua said.

"People will say that the party has lost its credibility... Liow likes to say that in order to reform MCA, MCA must be in the cabinet, that the Chinese want to see MCA in the cabinet.

"I think this is a very old lie that should not be repeated... if they want MCA in the cabinet, they would not have voted for DAP because they know DAP will not be in the cabinet."

Liow's true motive, Chua said, was further revealed by the fact that MCA was seen to be urgently pushing for an EGM to vote on this matter before the Kajang by-election is held.

"So I am telling Liow that if he really wants to see whether the Chinese want MCA in the cabinet, he should use Kajang as an acid test.

"If we can win that by-election, then I can say that MCA has returned and got the Chinese support, after which the party can table this resolution, which will become more meaningful."

Chua said that MCA's support among the Chinese voters has dwindled since 2004, even though it had a strong participation in the Abdullah Ahmad Badawi cabinet.

MCA had won 31 parliamentary and 76 state assembly seats in the general election that year and therefore took up four ministerial and 13 deputy ministerial positions.

"This was the history of MCA's full house as far as government representation is concerned," said Chua, who has been in the party for nearly three decades. "We could not do any better."

Four years later, in 2008, many Chinese voted against MCA, Chua said, but he declined to entertain the notion that there were other factors as to why the voters turned away from MCA.

But in 2011 and 2012, MCA delegates voted against taking up cabinet positions if the party did not regain the support of Chinese voters after the swing against the party in the 2008 general election.

Ministers will not change fortune of MCA

In the 13th general election last year, MCA secured only seven parliamentary and 11 state assembly seats.

"I do not believe that having a few ministers will change the fortune of the MCA," Chua said.

"We have only seven MPs, and I have to be very frank about it... not all are suitable to be ministers or deputy ministers. We used to have four (after 2008)... now, I don't think we can have four appointed..."

Chua shrugged off the fact that Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak had agreed to reserve one or two cabinet posts for MCA in May last year, despite the party's poor performance in GE13.

"If today you tell me that these two ministers can change the fortune of MCA, then these two ministers are not human beings... they are God-sent to save MCA, so may God save MCA," Chua said.

Asked how he felt about MCA's chances of winning the Kajang by-election, he said he had "guarded optimism" and went on to criticise PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim.

"The Chinese in Kajang must realise that Anwar is only concerned about his political career and will make use of the voters to achieve his own political agenda... he has no love for the voters," he said.

He added that Anwar was merely using the Kajang by-election to divert attention from his Sodomy II court case.

In GE13, PKR's Lee Chin Cheh won the Kajang seat with 6,824 more votes than MCA's Lee Ban Seng, in a six-cornered fight.

Lee vacated the seat suddenly on Jan 27, to make way for Anwar to formalise his involvement in the Selangor government, and the Election Commission has set March 23 as the polling date.

BN has not decided who its candidate for the by-election will be and to a question on this, Chua said he too did not want to add to the speculation.

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