

**Umno was ready to slug it out in Bukit Gelugor**  
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Penang Umno was prepared to slug it out at the Bukit Gelugor by-election which falls on May 5, if MCA had entered the ring, said its state liason chief Zainal Abidin Osman.

Zainal Abidin said that the party's 24 branches in Bukit Gelugor had formed their election machinery to garner support from the 14 percent Malay voters in the constituency, numbering 12,000, after the seat fell vacant on Apr 17. This was when Karpal Singh died in a car crash along the North-South Highway near Gua Tempurung in Perak.

His third son Ramkarpal Singh (right) is DAP's by-election candidate, while Parti Cinta Malaysia's Huan Cheng Guan and independent candidate Yacoob Mohd Noor, have declared their intention to contest.

"We were prepared to face the by-election and we believe that the Malay voters will continue to support BN," Zainal Abidin said in a Whatsapp message to Malaysiakini.

However, Zainal Abidin said the party accepted MCA's decision to forego the by-election as it is the latter's prerogative to do so since the seat belongs to the party.

"We believe that the MCA leadership has studied the matter carefully. It can now focus on the internal transformation within the party which has begun with the recent election of its president, Liow Tiong Lai. It has three years to regain the people's support," he pointed out.

#### Focus on anti-hudud campaign

Yesterday, MCA secretary-general Ong Ka Chuan announced the decision to not contest in Penang. He explained the party wants to focus on the campaign to prevent PAS from tabling a Private Members Bill on hudud in Kelantan in Parliament, come June 9.

Zainal added that Umno believes that MCA has not deserted its supporters in Bukit Gelugor by not contesting the seat as the party's leadership had promised to continue their service to the people there.

Meanwhile state BN chief Teng Chang Yeow said the coalition's central leadership has agreed to MCA's decision to stay out of the contest.

"Since their decision has been accepted by the BN national leadership, the state coalition will also endorse it," added the state Gerakan chief.

Source: <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/262465>