

MCA says it fears not Anwar, let alone tiger cub
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MCA has dismissed claims that it steered clear of the Bukit Gelugor by-election because of fear, stressing that it is not even afraid of Anwar Ibrahim and his wife, let alone a political debutante like Ramkarpal Singh.

Contrary to its detractors' accusations, party vice-president Chew Mei Fun said it was not a "cowardly" act but rather a "strategy".

Chew, who is also Penang MCA chief, said the party had earlier faced heavyweights like Anwar and PKR president Dr Wan Azizah Wan Ismail.

"If we are not afraid of Anwar and Wan Azizah, why should we be afraid of Ramkarpal? (left)" Chew told a press conference at Wisma MCA today.

However, Chew, who was defeated by Wan Azizah in the Kajang by-election, said the decision to refrain from contesting in Bukit Gelugor was "painful".

MCA had then claimed that it wanted to concentrate its efforts on the controversy surrounding hudud, as proposed by PAS.

Critics, including its former president Dr Chua Soi Lek, have criticised MCA for not contesting in Bukit Gelugor, with some claiming that the party feared a trouncing.

The parliamentary seat fell vacant with the death of Ramkarpal's father, Karpal Singh, in a tragic road accident on April 17.

In the last general election, Karpal, who was known as the "Tiger of Jelutong", obliterated his MCA opponent with a majority of more than 40,000 votes.

Ramkarpal retained his father's seat for DAP on May 25, defeating Parti Cinta Malaysia (PCM) vice-president Huan Cheng Guan and two Independent candidates.

MCA was also compared to Gerakan, which despite facing an uphill battle in the Teluk Intan by-election, managed to stage an upset and win the seat on May 31 with a slim majority of 238 votes.

