

MCA: We are loyal but won't blindly follow
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The MCA annual general meeting (AGM) today kicked off telling its key BN ally Umno that while they were still loyal, the Chinese party does not appreciate being led by the nose nor will it only silently follow, echoing the strong stance taken by its Youth AGM yesterday.



"Please do not question our loyalty to BN and our commitment to power sharing... However we are not a blind follower," said its president Chua Soi Lek at the party's 57th AGM in Kuala Lumpur today.

As such, Chua said that his party may not be on the same page with Umno nor BN all the time.

"There will be occasions when MCA will take a different stand from Umno. MCA needs to be sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the rakyat, so that we continue to be their voice in the government," said the former health minister.

Chua explained that this is to ensure MCA's political survival in the next general election as more and more Chinese are turning away from the party that was once considered the voice of the Chinese in Malaysia.

"We have to overcome the negative perception of the Chinese towards MCA. We have been perceived as a party that has been unable to voice out the aspirations of the community," he said.

"The people have spoken loud and clear," said Chua, adding that the MCA must take heed.

A sore point for MCA that continues to be coughed up at Umno's face is the Malay party's recent flirtations with extreme racist politics and its tacit support of ultra-Malay NGO Perkasa.

The issue was aired at yesterday's youth wing meeting, and Chua revisited it today.

Chua and MCA in general has been vocal against Perkasa, that many say receive Umno's silent support.

It has also been said that Umno has outsourced its Malay agenda - especially issues that are politically incorrect or problematic for the party - to Perkasa in order to sell itself as a moderate, repackaged 1Malaysia party.

Condemn racism

"Politicians from both sides of the political divide have been playing up on racial and religious issues. We strongly condemn such actions.

"I would appeal to all ... to reject those who thrive on racialism," said the MCA president.



In deference to the guest of honour Umno president Najib Abdul Razak, Chua praised the PM's 'inclusive' policies and his acquiescing to 'negotiations' on Chinese education,

However, Chua dropped a gentle reminder to Najib that the over RM300 million allocated to Chinese schools is still not enough.

The veteran politician told Najib that MCA's support for Chinese schools has never been for racial reasons but to ensure the prosperity of Malaysia.

Chinese education, he insisted, is important because of the emergence of China as an economic superpower and the need for a Mandarin-speaking workforce.

Chua also praised the government, specifically the Education Ministry for undertaking to pay the utility bills of Chinese schools.

'Nitpick on Pakatan'

Chua also reminded MCA members in the Pakatan-controlled states to remember that they are now the opposition and to start to behaving like one.

"Go ahead and expose the shortcomings, scandals, abuse of power, malpractices and weakness of those governments.

"And I am sure there are many," said Chua, telling his party supporters to commence an opposition-style guerrilla war and start to nitpick on the weaknesses of Pakatan states.



"Always take the lead instead of being mere followers, but be politically correct and raise sensible issues which affect the rakyat," he added.

Chua said that the party is also going on the offensive to declare cyber war to effectively disseminate their message to the voters.

"There has been too much twisted information in the cyber world and the wrong perception given of MCA and the government," said the MCA leader.

The Chinese party's AGM today also saw the attendance of S Samy Vellu representing MIC, however, Gerakan's Koh Tsu Koon was