

Ka Ting to reject cabinet post
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Embattled MCA president Ong Ka Ting today ended days of speculation by confirming that he would decline a cabinet post. MCPX

mca 59th anniversary 270208 ong ka ting speak
In a statement issued today, Ong said he felt responsible for the party's poor showing and lack of support from Chinese voters in the general election.

He was the housing and local government minister under the previous parliamentary term.

He said that he has informed the party's political bureau members of his decision on Sunday, one day after the humiliating defeat suffered by MCA in the general election.

"And to ensure that the Chinese representation is continued in the new government, I will be making recommendations to the prime minister soon," he said.

"I will continue to lead the party in this difficult period and seek the cooperation of all party leaders and members to ensure the party comes back stronger after the election debacle."

He said that it was important that the party continued to play a significant role in the new political environment.

"I urge all members to remain calm in facing this difficult period and help us to revive the party," he added.

He said that MCA would continue to fight for the community and be the community's voice in the government.

The MCA had four ministers in the previous cabinet - transport, human resources, health, and housing and local government.

Ong's announcement today came in the wake of a number of party divisions in Perak and Selangor demanding him to step down as president.

It is not clear whether this will help dampen the growing clamour for his resignation.

Speculated new names

polling day 080308 ong ka chuan voting
It is understood that Ong will be recommending Ong Tee Keat, Liow Tiang Lai, Ng Yen Yen and his brother, Perak MCA head Ong Ka Chuan (photo) for the four posts, respectively. All four will be newcomers to the cabinet.

The posts were previously held by Chan Kong Choy, Fong Chan Onn, Chua Soi Lek and Ong himself.

It is also learnt that MCA will not seek senatorships for those who lost in the elections.

The party, the second largest in the BN coalition, won 15 of the 40 parliamentary seats and

only 31 of the 90 state seats it contested.

The party suffered its heaviest losses since 1969, failing to defend its parliamentary seats in Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Negri Sembilan. In Selangor, Ong Tee Keat (Pandan parliamentary seat) was the lone survivor.

Ong's majority vote in Kulai (Johor) was drastically reduced against the outcome in 2004 at Tanjong Piai (against DAP's Tan Ah Meng), from 23,615 then to 11,744 now.

mca results for parliamentary seat 2008MCA vice-president Fong won with a majority of 12,884 against DAP candidate Tan Lay Siang in the Alor Gajah parliamentary seat.

Deputy ministers Tan Chai Ho (home ministry), Donald Lim Siang Chai (tourism) and Fu Ah Kiow (internal security) and parliamentary secretaries Chew Mei Fun (women, family and community development) and Yew Teong Look (federal territories ministry), all lost.

Transport Minister-cum-deputy president Chan Kong Choy declined nomination for a parliamentary seat, while Health Minister Chua Soi Lek resigned abruptly due to a sex scandal.

Observers note that the party used to have 18 representatives in the government - four ministers, nine deputy ministers, four parliamentary secretaries and one deputy speaker.

But now with only 15 wins in parliamentary seats and with Ong ruling himself out, the party is sure to have less representatives in the government.

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