

MCA reps deny claims of crossovers
Malaysiakini.com
Jun 16, 2008
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MCA parliamentarians today described PKR de facto leader Anwar Ibrahim's claims of crossovers from the Chinese-based party as unreliable as the weather forecast.
MCPX

Anwar had commented yesterday in Penang that a number of MCA representatives would be defecting to his Pakatan Rakyat coalition.

"Anwar's claims about crossovers sound to me like trying to predict the weather... Moreover, the decision is not his to make in the first place," said Unity, Culture, Arts and Heritage Deputy Minister Teng Boon Soon.

Teng, who is Tebrau MP, added that Anwar had been talking about the crossovers since the March 8 general elections but until now the PKR leader has nothing to show for it.

"First he said Pakatan Rakyat will take over in March, now he is saying that it will happen in September. Is he sure he will be able to do it in September this year or will it be September 2009?" he quipped.

MCA secretary-general Ong Ka Chuan has also strenuously denied Anwar's claims.

According to him, MCA leaders joined the party to serve the community and not for their own self-interest.

"The MCA elected representatives will not defect. MCA members have signed a pledge to defend the party's image and pledged their loyalty to the party when they were fielded as candidates during election," he said in a statement today.

"They know their commitment (to the party) is a serious one. MCA elected representatives are not those who are without principles.

He said that Anwar was using a "despicable tactic" to sow discord among BN component parties.

Ong urged all BN component parties to stay united and stop Anwar from achieving his objective.

Fong: No one likely to defect

Other prominent MCA leaders echoed Teng when contacted by Malaysiakini.

"What do you mean by (MCA) leaders? They could be leaders from the past or the present, from MCA grassroots or even leaders who lost in the last general elections," said Deputy Minister of Education Wee Ka Siong.

Wee, who is Ayer Itam MP, argued that Anwar can say "whatever he likes" but it is not necessarily the truth.

Meanwhile, MP for Gelang Patah Tan Ah Eng expressed shock and surprise when asked about Anwar's claims.

"I have never heard of such a thing," she said. "It is true MCA is facing a snag ... but we know we will be able to work things out and we will cooperate to make the situation better."

Fong Chan Onn, the party's vice-president and former human resource minister, said MCA has a strong legacy in the ruling coalition and it would be against "our grassroots if we ever leave Barisan".

He stressed that MCA is one of the original founders of BN and expressed hope that party leaders "understand their pledges to the coalition".

Fong also said that MCA has only 15 MPs and many of whom have secured important posts in the government.

Of the 15, four are ministers and six are deputy ministers. And as for the other five, one is party president (Ong Ka Ting) and another, party vice-president (Fong).

"I think it is unlikely to happen. Anwar is simply trying to carry out a psychological warfare," said Fong.

Fu: Anwar's claims 'simply preposterous'

MCA publicity bureau chief Fu Ah Kiow also dismissed Anwar's claims as "ridiculous".

"It is simply preposterous that Anwar Ibrahim can even create such allegations. It is nothing more than a cheap stunt to generate publicity for him," said Fu in a statement today.

He added that Anwar's claims were intended to drive a wedge between BN component parties and split the ruling coalition.

"Obviously Anwar is up to no good. This is part of his strategy in trying to make his comeback as the prime minister," said Fu.

While there are indeed problems within BN, Fu stressed that the coalition will face all the "trials and tribulations" together.

"In difficult times, we have always stuck together. BN recognises that we have to re-invent, re-brand for the country to move forward," he said.

"Through thick and thin, we have always stood by each other, and will continue to do so. We do not believe in abandoning our friends in difficult times," he added.

Fu also advised Pakatan "to stop playing politics" in the five states which are currently under the opposition coalition's control.

"Pakatan Rakyat should find means to develop those states, bring in more income for the benefit of the people. They should stop politicking," he said.

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