

**Soi Lek: Wan Farid a strategic choice for Chinese Malaysiakini.com**  
**Andrew Ong and Kuek Ser Kuang Keng 9, 2009**

MCA deputy president Dr Chua Soi Lek said Barisan Nasional candidate Wan Abdul Farid Salleh was a strategic choice for Chinese voters in Kuala Terengganu for the Jan 17 by-election.  
MCPX

He said a victory for Wan Abdul Farid will guarantee the constituents representation from a deputy minister.

According to him, this would complement the role of the sole Chinese representative in the state government, Bandar assemblyperson Toh Chin Yaw, who is also a state executive councillor.

kuala terengganu by election 090109 chua soi lek lone ranger 03 "If we want to empower Toh, then Wan Abdul Farid is a good person to choose... at the federal level, you have a deputy minister and at the state level you have an exco. This will complement each other," he told Malaysiakini when met in Kuala Terengganu yesterday.

The MCA leader was in town for one day on a vote canvassing mission with his son and Labis MP Chua Tee Yong.

The former health minister said that Chinese voters are primarily concerned with economic development and the state government has been fair to all races in Terengganu such as in areas of education and poverty eradication.

"I once participated in the bantuan raya (public aid) scheme, which has been operating since 2001, and I was quiet surprised that 30 percent of the recipient are Chinese. These are positive factors for Barisan," he said.

**Send a strong signal**

In view of this, Chua said one of the ongoing opposition campaign themes, which states that one less BN MP would not be detrimental to the Chinese community, was incorrect.

"A strong vote for BN will send a strong signal that they want to maintain the relationship between the two major races as well as showing that the government had been fair to all races and the Chinese are rational thinking voters," he said.

kt by election 070109 wan farid walking Asked if Wan Abdul Farid was at a disadvantage since this was his first election outing whereas his PAS opponent Abdul Wahid Endut was a five-term Wakaf Mempelam assemblyperson, Chua said the opposite was true.

"Wan Abdul Farid has been very active in Kuala Terengganu and he is known by the Chinese not so much as a politician but a corporate lawyer with a Chinese partner," he said.

Chua and his son were canvassing for votes and visiting various Chinese guilds during their low-profile visit. His method contrasted with other MCA top guns who usually travel in large groups to meet voters.

The politician denied that he was being marginalised by the party and was instead adopting a new strategy of meeting and talking to individual voters.

"The days where a handshake would secure a vote is over. If there are still political leaders who believe in that, then I pity him," he said.

### **Umno has changed**

Later, at a meeting with some 20 leaders of the Kuala Terengganu Teo Chew association, Chua said in a speech that contrary to the opposition's claim, Umno has undergone a lot of changes since the March general election.

He said the biggest change was Prime Minister and Umno president Abdullah Ahmad Badawi stepping down to pave way for new leadership in March.

"This is the first time in history, in a democratic country, where a leader leads his party to victory but steps down gracefully. This is not something easy to do," he said.

Chua said the government has also taken pains to reform the Anti-Corruption Agency and establish the Judicial Appointments Commission.

On statements made by Umno leaders that have irked the Chinese community, Chua told the crowd that the statements were made by junior party leaders jostling for positions in the party elections and does not represent the party's position.

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