

**Najib to MCA: Solve crisis swiftly**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak today urged MCA to solve its internal problems swiftly before it becomes a major issue for the Barisan Nasional.

Speaking after opening the National Economic Advisory Council in Kuala Lumpur this morning, he said both factions within the party should think of BN's interests and not let the crisis deteriorate.

He was referring to two factions led by party president Ong Tee Keat and sacked deputy president Dr Chua Soi Lek.

"What they need to do is to fix the problem immediately... don't let this crisis erode the people's support for MCA and, BN as a whole," he said.

Najib also reiterated that they should adhere to BN's principles, which is to resolve "internal matters" within the party.

The party on Wednesday had sacked deputy president Chua over his sex scandal which broke out in late 2007, early 2008.

**Both are still 'adamant about their positions'**

According to the prime minister, both Ong and Chua seem to be "adamant about their positions" and only time will tell if they are ready to confront each other.

"Now we have to wait for both parties to talk, or maybe someone can become a mediator for their discussions," he said.

However, Najib's latest comment does not reflect the willingness that he mentioned yesterday, where he would act as an intermediary, if he is invited.

Meanwhile, Ong said that he met Najib along with party vice-presidents Liow Tiong Lai and Kong Cho Ha to explain the decision taken by the presidential council to sack Chua.

"We are deeply aware that the presidential council's decision to expel the former deputy president may cause concern for component party members of Barisan Nasional.

"Najib's stand to allow MCA to solve its internal issues without his interference is appreciated. I am also grateful for Najib's advice to resolve this party matter as swiftly as possible," wrote in his blog.

He also said that that the party leadership was united in its stand to overcome the challenges that may arise.

"Our focus is not on excessive politicking but in serving the people first. I have also told Najib in very clear terms that the MCA is committed to the concept of 1Malaysia," he added.

**PM on Kartika**

On a separate development yesterday, he also refuted claims made by Syarie Lawyers Association that the government intervened in the punishment carried out against model Kartika Seri Dewi Shukarno.

"No, we are not interfering. It is up to the Syariah court to decide," said Najib briefly.

Kartika, a mother of two, was scheduled to be caned at the Kajang Prison three days ago after she was found guilty for drinking beer at a Cherating hotel lounge last year.

But, her punishment was postponed indefinitely on the Attorney-General's advice to respect the fasting month of Ramadhan.

She will be the first woman to be caned under Islamic law in Malaysia, with the punishment set to be executed in a female prison.

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