

'Disappointed' Soi Lek says no need to beat 'war drums'
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KUALA LUMPUR - In a response to Muhyiddin Yassin's reminder that MCA should be mindful of what they say, Dr Chua Soi Lek said Tuesday he was disappointed with the DPM for raising the spectre of May 13 incident.

The MCA president said the party is sensitive of its role in Barisan Nasional but it has its role to play as a Chinese-based party.

In a press statement Tuesday, Chua said the socio-economic condition in Malaysia today is totally different from that in 1969 as Malaysians are capable of having rational discussions without beating the racial war drum.

On Monday, Muhyiddin reminded MCA that the unfair distribution of wealth had resulted in the 1969 racial riot, the worst in the multi-racial country.

The MCA president pointed out that at no time did the party talk about the special rights of the Malay community.

"The loyalty of the MCA towards Barisan Nasional should not be questioned as it has gone through good and bad times when Umno suffered setbacks. Back then MCA had delivered support to ensure its victory in the general elections," he said.

"All we ask for is fair share. Rest assured, the MCA has no plans or interest to deprive other communities of what is rightfully theirs."

On the economy, Chua said in a multi-racial country, growth should not be a zero-sum game as there are reasons to worry that "we will continue to be trapped as a middle-income country if we do not liberalize our economy and boost investment."

"We reaffirm that affirmative action should be based on needs, merits and be market-friendly."

He said the party advocates that Bumiputras should be given price preference in certain economic sectors when the economy is liberalized for open tender.

"To enable the Bumiputras to compete on a more equitable basis, hence, we propose for gradual reduction of the 30% Bumiputra equity and the introduction of price preference," said Chua in his statement.

On Malaysia achieving its target set up in the 10th Malaysia Plan and New Economic Model to become a high-income nation by 2020, Chua said the country has to attract domestic and foreign investment.

"In order to attract RM115 billion of private investment per annum under the 10th Malaysia Plan, we must ensure that our economy is competitive and vibrant.

"We can only achieve the target by liberalizing sectors such as oil and gas as well as telecommunication; rationalizing subsidy and opening tender with price preference to Bumiputras," he said.

He added that an expanding economic cake is "like rising tide that lifts all boats," so that all Malaysians will have a fair share of wealth distribution.

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