

Anwar: MCA, MIC's support for Barisan candidates shows loyalty

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KUALA LUMPUR: MCA and MIC have offered their support to the unity government despite opting out in contesting during the upcoming six state elections, says Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The Prime Minister said the presidents of both parties had contacted him and expressed their intention to skip the state polls.

"They also offered their support (for the unity government) but I feel this is actually under the purview of Barisan Nasional.

"I would like to thank them for their steadfastness and loyalty to help and defend the position of the unity government," he told reporters after attending EPF's International Social Wellbeing Conference 2023 yesterday.

Meanwhile, Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi said the matter would be discussed at the upcoming Barisan meeting.

The Deputy Prime Minister and Barisan chairman said the two component parties had their reasons for not fielding candidates in the polls.

"As Barisan chairman, I respect the decision made by the two component parties.

"However, we will further dis-

cuss the matter at the Barisan supreme council meeting on July 10," he told reporters after attending the Rural and Regional Development Ministry's monthly gathering yesterday.

He said relations with both parties were good, adding that seats had already been determined for them to contest in the upcoming polls.

Ahmad Zahid, however, did not indicate the number of seats allocated to MCA and MIC.

He said MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Wee Ka Siong had informed him of the party's decision on Wednesday night.

He had also read news reports quoting the MIC secretary-general on the party's decision.

Asked if he regarded the component parties' decision as a boycott, Ahmad Zahid reiterated Barisan respected their stand.

"They have their own reasons for making the decision. Let's not speculate on matters that we are unclear of.

"Give us time and space to discuss this," he said.

Ahmad Zahid also said despite the decision to sit out the polls, MCA and MIC would help other Barisan parties during campaigning.

"This is their commitment to us: They will continue to give their cooperation and will campaign,"



Honoured guest: Dr Ahmad Zahid arriving at World Trade Centre Kuala Lumpur. - ONG SOON HIN/The Star

he said.

Ahmad Zahid said the seats allocated to the two parties would remain for Barisan to contest should they stick to their decision to sit out the polls.

MCA had said the party would focus on preparing for the 16th General Election and as such, would sit out the upcoming August polls in six states.

Its secretary-general Datuk Chong Sin Woon said the decision was reached after in-depth discussion and analysis, as well as taking into account the current political situation.

"At the same time, MCA will play its role as a Barisan component by helping the candidates of Barisan component parties in the

six states," he said in a statement yesterday.

Currently, MCA holds seven state assembly seats - one in Perak two in Melaka and four in Johor.

MIC also concurred with MCA on the state elections, with its secretary-general RT Rajasekaran also announcing his party preferred to focus on GE16.

MIC has six state seats - three in Johor and one each in Melaka, Negri Sembilan and Pahang.

Polls for Negri Sembilan, Selangor, Penang, Kedah, Kelantan and Terengganu will be in Aug 12.

A 14-day campaign period will start after the nominations on July 29.