

Contest in Ipoh, Tee Keat dares 'winnable' Soi Lek
The Malaysian Insider
October 03, 2011
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KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 3 — MCA maverick Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat suggested his party president and rival Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek run for national elections in the DAP stronghold of Ipoh to prove he is a "winnable candidate".

Ong, who is also Pandan MP, continued his bitter rivalry with Dr Chua on the micro-blogging social network which started yesterday at the MCA's 58th annual general meeting.

In a post on his Twitter account, talk2otk, Ong (picture) said: "Wow, Chua Soi Lek claimed he is winnable anywhere. Good 4 him 2 contest in Ipoh Timur or Barat as he is helming Perak MCA."

Both Ipoh seats are considered DAP fortresses held by two opposition strongmen. Veteran lawmaker and DAP adviser Lim Kit Siang is the MP for Ipoh Timur and Ipoh Barat is held by M. Kulasegaran, who is also a DAP vice-chairman.

The former transport minister was responding to Dr Chua's declaration to reporters last night: "I consider myself a winnable candidate everywhere I go."

Johor-born Dr Chua was Labis MP before he was forced to resign after a video recording of him having sex with his mistress in a hotel room was leaked to the public.

The visibly annoyed Dr Chua also called on Ong yesterday to quit the party after the latter's "disparaging remarks" against the MCA's top echelon.

"Who is CSL 2 demand me 2 resign as MP of Pandan? Mandate came from rakyat, not from CSL," Ong tweeted his reply today, adding: "My relevance is not 2 be dictated by our maharaja CSL."

Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Najib Razak has said that only winnable candidates will be fielded by the coalition in the 13th general election, and has hinted that incumbent candidates may be dropped in favour of younger BN leaders.

Dr Chua, who deposed Ong as MCA boss in a fractious power struggle 18 months ago, continues to decline confirming his own candidacy despite revealing this week that several current leaders will not run in the coming polls.

Rumours have also been swirling since February that Ong will be dropped as Pandan MP as he grows increasingly isolated following his defeat to Dr Chua.

In 2008, the married Dr Chua stepped down as health minister and MCA vice-president after admitting he was the man featured in a secretly-recorded video which showed him having sex with his lover.

The Labis seat is now held by his son, deputy minister Chua Tee Yong.

But Dr Chua made a comeback later to win the party's deputy presidency after the MCA's top two leaders resigned due to its poor showing in Election 2008. The party won just 15 of 40 federal and 31 of 90 state seats it contested.

The party subsequently sacked Dr Chua in August 2009 over the sex scandal, sparking an extraordinary general meeting where a vote of no-confidence in Ong was passed.

Dr Chua became MCA president in March 2010 in fresh elections where he saw off Ong and former president Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting.

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