

MCA to field new faces in Negri Sembilan
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By Lisa J. Ariffin

SEREMBAN, Oct 16 — MCA will draw up a list of fresh, new faces and “middle-aged but mature” candidates to contest in Negri Sembilan for the coming polls, Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek said today.

The MCA president said priority would be given to young candidates with potential and those who fulfil Datuk Seri Najib Razak’s “winnable candidate” criterion.

He described Negri Sembilan as “important to MCA”, adding that his party leaders planned to spend more time in the state, which the federal opposition is confident of toppling in the coming polls.

“We will sit together and discuss with the Mentri Besar seat allocations as well as identify which seats we have a greater chance of winning.

“This is so we can channel more resources, energy and time to ensure our victory,” Dr Chua told the Negri Sembilan Barisan Nasional (BN) convention here this morning.

Pakatan Rakyat (PR) recently expressed confidence that a marginal five per cent vote swing in four key seats in Negri Sembilan would be enough to topple the BN state government.

State PR leaders had told The Malaysian Insider that a win in the Pilah, Kelawang, Lenggeng, and Linggi state seats, which BN won by wafer-thin majorities in Election 2008, would secure the coalition a simple majority in the 36-member state legislative assembly.

BN won Pilah by 1,258 votes, Kelawang by 1,167 votes, Lenggeng (1,285) and Linggi (1,575). BN won 52.6 per cent (178,048) of the state’s popular votes, while PR won 47.4 per cent (160,504) at the time.

The ruling coalition currently controls the state government with 21 state assemblymen (Umno-19, MCA-1, MIC-1) while PR has 15 assemblymen (DAP-10, PKR-4, PAS-1). Should PR retain its current seats and win over four BN state seats, it would mean that PR would be able to control the state assembly with a 19-17 simple majority.

“MCA’s stand is that as long as any component of BN is seen as having winning potential ... we will support it,” Dr Chua said.

“We believe wholly in the leadership of Datuk Sri (Najib) and in other BN leaders to determine winnable situations for BN,” he added.

In his speech, Dr Chua also called for all MCA members to put aside their differences and unite against the common enemy.

“The greatest gift that we can give to our enemies in our own party is forgiveness, and to our rivals from other parties, tolerance.

“If we can practise these virtues, MCA will become stronger and more stable with each

passing day," he said.

"Our enemies are not from our own parties, but Pakatan Rakyat."

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