

Nothing wrong with Liow's Bagan boast, says Soi Lek
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By Shazwan Mustafa Kamal

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 17 — Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek today sought to play down Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai's claim that the MCA will unseat Lim Guan Eng as Bagan MP in the next election, saying that his deputy's remark was a "political statement" in "good faith".

The MCA president, who was responding to Lim's challenge to Liow to contest the federal seat, said the Penang chief minister should focus on running the state instead of making "political challenges."

"It was a political statement made in good faith, optimistic, there is nothing wrong with that.

"No leader will go and say that they will lose or cannot win (in elections)," Dr Chua (picture) told reporters here.

Lim told The Malaysian Insider yesterday that he would "only comment if Liow Tiong Lai or (Datuk Seri Dr) Ng Yen Yen stands in Bagan."

Ng is an MCA vice-president and minister of tourism. The MCA lost in all the seats it contested in Penang in 2008.

"Guan Eng as chief minister should rise above personal politics, and make sure that Penang is run well.

"DAP is just good at political rhetoric," Dr Chua said.

Dr Ng told Lim to go and "settle" on-going problems in Penang, and to stop issuing political challenges.

"Guan Eng is only good at challenging people. Go and settle your 'Kancil carpark' issue which has been bungled. That is enough from me. You tell him that," she told The Malaysian Insider when met outside Wisma MCA here.

MCA deputy president Liow said over the weekend that Bagan voters were now "open to accept Barisan Nasional (BN)" despite Lim trouncing the MCA's Song Choy Leng by 22,070 votes in Election 2008.

The health minister added that the MCA already had a candidate for Bagan who would give Pakatan Rakyat (PR) a run for its money.

Lim led his party's state chapter to a historic win in Penang, which was one of the first states to fall into opposition hands during the 2008 political tsunami.

He won the Air Puteh state seat by 4,061 votes as PR whitewashed both the MCA and Gerakan from the state assembly, ending the latter's 40-year reign in the state.

In November last year, Gerakan president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon announced that he

would not contest in the next polls, silencing calls from party members and the opposition for him to take on Lim in Bagan.

Analysts have repeatedly predicted Lim's tenure would continue after the 13th general election due to his prudent management of the state and pursuit of his party's competency, accountability and transparency (CAT) principles.

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