

**In Soi Lek-Guan Eng debate, Umno takes centrestage**  
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**By Shannon Teoh**

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 18 — The highly anticipated debate between Lim Guan Eng and Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek saw both leaders accuse the other of being afraid to stand up to Umno, the dominant Malay party that has held the reins of power since independence.

MCA president Dr Chua began the debate by immediately accusing Lim's DAP of being "political eunuchs" who dare not go up against Umno in elections.

"DAP says it is multiracial but depends on Chinese support and wins only in Chinese seats. They tell Chinese they need to teach Umno a lesson but they never face Umno," he told an audience of over 800.

But DAP secretary general Lim shot back, saying the MCA has never been brave enough to stand up to its Barisan Nasional (BN) partner.

"Umno talks about Ketuanan Melayu (Malay Supremacy). Is MCA brave enough to stop them? Can't MCA see, this two-race system is within BN itself," the Penang chief minister said.

The Bagan MP also referred to the RM250 million National Feedlot Centre (NFC) scandal that has engulfed Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, calling it "just the tip of the iceberg."

"Former MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Tee Keat has admitted MCA used to eat Umno's leftovers. But now MCA can only get breadcrumbs," he said.

Dr Chua, who deposed Ong as party president in March 2010 after a protracted power struggle, dismissed Ong's statement, pointing out "that's why in one year, we brought him down."

Lim also said that the RM12.5 billion Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) scandal has seen Tun Dr Ling Liong Sik and Tan Sri Chan Kong Choy, former MCA president and deputy president respectively, being charged in court while their then Cabinet colleagues from Umno "got away scot free."

But Dr Chua said this displayed his foe's "racial sentiment by asking why only Chinese were charged but not Malays."

The debate, themed "Chinese at a Crossroads. Is the 2 Party System Becoming a 2 Race System?", was also screened on Astro in both Mandarin and with Malay translation.

The floor largely backed a stern-looking Dr Chua whose opponent smiled through most of the debate despite enduring heavy fire from questions by the audience.

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