

MCA elders call for Soi Lek's head to roll
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By Boo Su-Lyn

KUALA LUMPUR, May 10 — Veteran MCA leaders today told party president Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek to resign after the Barisan Nasional (BN) component party's disastrous showing in Election 2013.

The MCA only managed to win seven out of 37 federal seats and 11 out of 90 state seats that it contested in the May 5 general election.

"We're asking our party president Datuk Seri Chua Soi Lek to kindly step down at this time to allow new members to come in to revive and resuscitate the party," former party president Tan Koon Swan said.

"We have no personal agenda nor are we against Dr Chua personally. For the sake of our party and the community especially, he should take responsibility and step down," said Tan, who acted as the group's spokesman.

Dr Chua had already said he will not contest the party presidency in this year's internal elections while other MCA divisional leaders have asked him to step down over the party's poor showing.

Tan also said that the MCA elders, 10 of whom were present at the press conference today, were "saddened by the total embarrassment and humiliation" of the party's worst polls showing in its 64-year history.

Former MCA deputy president Tan Sri Lee Kim Sai also said that Dr Chua staying even a minute longer was "too long".

Dr Chua said last Monday that MCA would not take up any government post.

Tan, however, insisted that MCA was still relevant and that it was in the Chinese community's "best interest that there is Chinese representation in the Cabinet".

"In a multi-racial country like ours, our founding fathers have thought it fit that this country must be represented by all," said Tan.

"That's why the early structure of Barisan Nasional included everyone, whether you're from Sabah or Sarawak, everyone's included and it has worked very well. It's brought the country peace and stability. We see no reason why this pattern should finish," added the former MCA chief, who served from 1985 to 1986.

Tan also noted that Election 2013, where BN suffered historic losses as it ceded an additional seven federal seats to Pakatan Rakyat (PR), was a "good transition to a two-party system".

Former MCA president Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting had resigned after the Election 2008 "political tsunami", where the party won just 15 parliamentary seats.

Tan said that Chinese voters swung towards PR out of frustration with corruption and social

injustice.

He added that the party constitution would prevent any leadership crisis if Dr Chua were to heed calls to step down.

"We're asking party members to come back so the party can become credible and respected again," said Tan.

BN lost the popular vote to PR in Election 2013 and saw its seat tally reduced to 133, while PR won 89 seats in Parliament.

MCA was formed in 1949 by the late Tun Tan Cheng Lock to save the Chinese in Malaya from being repatriated to China during the guerrilla war against the communists in the Malayan Emergency.

The 10 MCA elders present at today's press conference are Tan, Lee, Tan Sri Lim Ah Lek, Tan Sri Wong Sea Wah, Tan Sri Dr Sak Cheng Lum, Tan Sri Lau Yin Pin, Datuk Jimmy Lau, Datuk Fu Ah Kiow, Datuk Wong Kam Hong, and Wang Choon Wing.

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