

Pulau Pinang MCA Fully Supports Decision Not To Contest Bukit Gelugor By-election

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KUALA LUMPUR, May 11 (Bernama) -- Penang MCA fully supported the MCA presidential council's decision not to contest in the Bukit Gelugor parliamentary by-election this May 25.

Its liaison committee chairman Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun said MCA needed to give full attention to the issue arising from Pas' proposal on the hudud law implementation.

"The Penang MCA liaison committee considers that the implementation of the hudud law by Pas will trigger a constitutional crisis.

"This posed a big challenge (after the country's independence) as it will be tabled in Parliament and a cause for concern nationwide," she said in a statement here Sunday.

Yesterday MCA secretary-general Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan announced that MCA would not be contesting in the constituency as it wanted to focus on the hudud issue.

In George Town, Penang MIC liaison committee chairman M. Karuppanan described the MCA decision not to contest in Bukit Gelugor as a realistic and honourable action.

He said the by-election was not similar to the 13th general election (GE13) or other by-elections as the incumbent MP, Karpal Singh died in a tragic road accident and intense campaigning for the seat would be unwarranted.

"It's not about losing before a fight. We have three more years to work and win the seat in GE14," he said when contacted.

He said by staying away from the by-election, the Barisan Nasional (BN) could devote its machinery for the Teluk Intan parliamentary by-election where it has a fighting chance of winning.

Penang Wanita Umno chief Senator Norliza Abdul Rahim said although the MCA was staying away from Bukit Gelugor it should continue to fulfil its promise to serve residents of the constituency.

She said the MCA decision not to contest the seat to enable it to focus on the constitutional crisis over PAS' plan to table the Private Member Bill on hudud should be respected.

"This is the right time for MCA to bring the party back to the mainstream of the political arena and strengthen the party before GE14," she added.

Expressing his regret over the decision, Penang Malay Congress president Rahmad Isahak said the by-election could give an avenue to the MCA to regain lost ground and make further inroad in Penang.

"This decision was unexpected. Whether MCA wins or not is immaterial. With their current position, it's important for MCA to be able to reduce DAP's majority, otherwise the opposition will maintain its stranglehold in Penang," he said.

The Bukit Gelugor parliamentary by-election is set for May 25 while the Teluk Intan parliamentary by-election on May 31.

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