

Najib Invites MCA to Rejoin Cabinet, Help Chart Future of Nation Together
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KUALA LUMPUR, May 3 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak on Saturday invited the MCA to rejoin the Cabinet, grow stronger within the Barisan Nasional (BN) and help chart the future of the nation together.

Najib, who is also BN chairman, said he would decide the "details" of the matter.

"MCA cannot stay outside the government. You need to be part and parcel of the BN government because, if you talk about being stronger together, you have to be inside the government. We will chart the future of Malaysia," he said.

Najib spoke at the launch of MCA's transformation campaign, themed "Stronger Together", at a unity gathering of the party here.

MCA president Datuk Seri Liow Tiong Lai, deputy president Datuk Dr Wee Ka Siong and other senior party leaders were present at the event.

Najib said MCA's participant in the Cabinet would definitely assist the government to plan relevant policies for the benefit of all races in the country.

"I am certainly giving serious consideration to MCA but, as you know, I am like a father who has many children. We (BN) have 13 parties," he said.

Najib also reminded MCA to redouble efforts and discover the real strength to ensure that the party remained strong among the Chinese community.

"I don't want to hear about one million MCA members. I want to know your real strength. So, go down to the ground, meet every member and ask 'are you still committed to MCA? We need to know,'" he said.

The prime minister advised MCA to be united and discard factionalism in facing the next general election so that the party would be able to field the best candidates.

"Be realistic. We want the best MCA candidates to stand in each constituency," he said.

Najib said that in terms of parliamentary seats won by the party, the MCA went down to 12 seats in the 2008 general election and then to seven in the 2013 election.

"We cannot afford the MCA to go down any further. We want the MCA to go up and up, higher and higher, further and further.

"This is the spirit of the gathering this time, and I will be with you always," Najib said.

Meanwhile, Liow said MCA's decision to rejoin the Cabinet was much lauded by Najib.

He said all this while, the top leaderships of other Barisan Nasional (BN) component parties also hoped MCA would rejoin the Cabinet because the party, prior to this, was tied by a resolution, following its heavy losses in the 12th and 13th general elections.

"But, the decision on Cabinet posts will be discussed later. We will wait for the final word from the prime minister on the posts," he said.

The resolution against joining the Cabinet cropped up during the 2011 MCA General Assembly when the party, under the then-leadership of Datuk Seri Dr Chua Soi Lek had approved a resolution against receiving any post in the government if it failed in the 13th General Election.

The resolution was reaffirmed in the 2012 MCA General Assembly and the party's extraordinary general meeting on Oct 20, last year.

At the general election on May 5, last year, MCA recorded its worst performance after winning only seven parliamentary seats and 11 state seats, out of the 37 parliamentary and 90 state seats contested.

But on Feb 23, MCA through its extraordinary general meeting, passed a resolution to accept government posts at all levels, which paved the way for the party to return to the Cabinet.

On the Bukit Gelugor parliamentary seat vacated by the death of incumbent Karpal Singh in a road mishap, Liow said MCA would definitely contest in the by-election but the decision on the candidate would be announced later.

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