

# Neo told of removal on Friday

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that Datuk Dr Neo Yee Pan was told of his removal as Housing and Local Government Minister last night.

The Prime Minister and Barisan Nasional chairman said the post would be left vacant for the time being.

Asked how Dr Neo took the news, Dr Mahathir said: "I have not come to a stage where I'm able to read other people's minds but he seemed normal."

Dr Mahathir said Dr Neo met him on Tuesday, during which Dr Neo told him that he would not bow to pressure from certain quarters who want him to step down as acting president.

Dr Neo, 47, joined the

MCA as a member of the Maju Ward in 1968.

In 1973, he was elected a member of the MCA central committee and moved up the party hierarchy quickly. He was appointed secretary-general in 1975, appointed a vice-president in 1979, elected vice-president in 1981 and appointed deputy president in 1982, before taking over as acting president in 1983.

He was a deputy dean of the University of Malaya's science faculty when he quit to contest the Muar Parliamentary seat in the 1974 general election and won by defeating DAP's Hoo Sin Geok by a majority of 17,466 votes.

On winning the seat, he was appointed Parliamen-

tary Secretary to the Power, Technology and Research Ministry. Two years later, he was appointed Deputy Minister of Culture, Youth and Sports.

In the July 1978 general election, he defeated the DAP and PAS candidates with a majority of 12,355 votes to retain his Muar seat.

Dr Neo was appointed Deputy Finance Minister in a January 1978 Cabinet reshuffle until 1979 when he moved up following his appointment as Housing and Local Government Minister.

His appointment as MCA deputy president in 1982 followed the resignation of Datuk Richard Ho.