

# Why Yee Pan was dropped

DATUK Dr Neo Yee Pan was dropped from the Cabinet as Housing and Local Government Minister because the Prime Minister saw no other way to resolve the MCA crisis.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said that initially, he did not intend to drop Dr Neo from the Cabinet although there were some within the MCA itself which felt that while Dr Neo did not have majority support from party members, his status as a Minister gave him the protection which was not deserving of his

weak leadership.

According to *Merdeka*, after Mr Tan Koon Swan agreed not to contest the MCA presidency on condition that Dr Neo did the same, efforts were made to get Dr Neo's endorsement to this formula as a solution to the crisis.

It said Dr Neo refused to agree to this.

Following this, *Merdeka* said, the Barisan Nasional felt that Dr Neo was the stumbling block to a solution to the crisis. The Barisan felt that if a general election was held, candi-

dated 7 SEP 1985, chosen by Dr Neo would not get support because of the split and this would affect the Barisan as well.

Dr Mahathir was quoted as saying that a leader must put his party before himself.

"A leader must be willing to sacrifice his interests for the party. A person who is not willing to do this is no longer qualified to lead the party or represent it in government," he said.

This was why Dr Neo was dropped from the Cabinet, he added.