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KUALA LUMPUR, FEB 16 (BERNAMA) -- MCA PRESIDENT DATUK DR LING LIONG SIK CREATED MALAYSIAN POLITICAL HISTORY WHEN HE BECAME THE FIRST NON-UMNO CHAIRMAN OF THE RULING BARISAN NABIONAL TODAY, EVEN THOUGH FOR ONLY A FEW MINUTES.

A MEETING OF THE BN SUPREME COUNCIL UNANIMOUSLY DECIDED HE SHOULD FILL THE POST, THE FIRST NON-UMNO LEADER TO DO SO, BASED ON THE MCA'S POSITION AS THE SECOND LARGEST PARTY IN THE COALITION.

TODAY'S MEETING HAD TO CHOOSE A CHAIRMAN FOLLOWING A COURT RULING THAT UMNO WAS AN UNLAWFUL SOCIETY. THIS HAD AFFECTED UMNO'S MEMBERSHIP IN THE BN WHERE PRIME MINISTER (DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD, AS UMNO PRESIDENT, HAD BEEN THE CHAIRMAN.

DATUK DR LING PRESIDED OVER PROCEEDINGS FOR THREE MINUTES, DURING WHICH A MOTION WAS ADOPTED TO ACCEPT AN APPLICATION TO JOIN THE BN BY THE NEW UMNO, FORMED BY SUPREME COUNCIL MEMBERS OF THE OLD UMNO UNDER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR.

AFTER THE MEETING HAD ADMITTED THE NEW PARTY INTO THE BN FOLD, DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER GHAFAR BABA AND FINANCE MINISTER DATUK PADUKA DAIM ZAINUDDIN, WHO ARE THE PRO TEM PRESIDENT, DEPUTY PRESIDENT AND TREASURER RESPECTIVELY, WALKED INTO THE MEETING ROOM. -- MORE
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THE MEETING, WHICH STARTED AT 11AM, RE-APPOINTED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR BN CHAIRMAN.

HE THEN TOOK OVER AND PRESIDED OVER THE REST OF THE MEETING.

AT THE END OF THE MEETING AN HOUR LATER, ENCIK JOHN BEAN WASSER, GENERAL MANAGER OF THE PAN PACIFIC HOTEL, WHERE THE MEETING WAS HELD, PRESENTED DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR WITH A CAKE TO MARK THE FORMATION OF THE NEW UMNO.

ENCIK WASSER ALSO SURPRISED ENCIK GHAFAR, WHO TURNS 63 ON THURSDAY, WITH A BIRTHDAY CAKE. -- BERNAMA
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