

# PM: I'LL MEET LING OVER GROUSES

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NEW YORK, Thurs. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will meet Datuk Dr Ling Liong Sik in connection with the MCA president's complaints against the Barisan Nasional.

"I will have to talk to him about what he is unhappy about when he comes back (from leave)," the Prime Minister said in response to questions from reporters on Dr Ling's allegations that the Barisan had not kept its 1986 election promises.

Dr Mahathir said he approved Dr Ling's application for six weeks' no-pay leave before leaving for his current trip to Europe, here and Tokyo.

He said Dr Ling had "told me that he was tired and needed a rest."

He said there was no provision for no-pay leave for Ministers as they did not come specifically under the General Orders but since it was not costing the Government anything, "I allowed him to go on leave."

Asked about the move by former Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Musa Hitam to become an Independent in the Dewan Rakyat, Dr Mahathir said it would not affect the Barisan.

"Even with the crossovers, the Barisan still have a majority, in fact, more than two thirds majority."

Asked about the crossovers in Johore, he said the Barisan needed only 50 per cent of the seats in the State Assembly to form the Government.

In Kuala Lumpur, Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Ghafar Baba said there was no rift between Umno Baru and the MCA.

"As far as I am concerned, the MCA continues to be a part of the Barisan and the Government," he told reporters during a visit to a porcelain exhibition by his daughter.

He said Umno Baru and the MCA had always talked over their problems during the weekly Cabinet meetings and Barisan supreme council meetings.

"We have the chance to meet often, just as the other parties in the Barisan," Encik Ghafar, who is Barisan secretary-general, said.

"We have always had good working relations with the MCA," he added.

Earlier, Encik Ghafar chaired a meeting of the Umno Baru Federal Territory liaison committee.

He said the meeting discussed the membership of Umno Baru in the Federal Territory which now stood at 32,000.

"Initially, we processed about 40,000. We found later that about 8,000 were not genuine applications," he said.