

By-election daret Dr Mahathir leaves it to MCA

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KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. — Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has left it to the MCA to decide whether to allow its deputy president Lee Kim Sai to contest a by-election against DAP deputy secretary-general Lee Lam Thye.

The Prime Minister said today that it was up to the MCA to allow Mr Lee to contest the Seputeh parliamentary seat.

"I am leaving the matter to the parties concerned," he told reporters after attending Friday prayers with the Y&J di-Pertuan Agong at the Sallehin Mosque at the Police Training Centre in Jalan Semarak here.

Both the Lees have accepted a challenge to contest in the Seputeh constituency here. Mr Lee Kim Sai is Labour Minister and MP for Hulu Langat while Mr Lee Lam Thye is MP for Bukit Bintang.

Mr Lee Kim Sai had said he would hand in his resignation to the Sneaker at Parliament House on May 19 while Mr Lee Lam Thye will do so on May 11.

Meanwhile, MCA Youth leader Datuk Yap Pian Hon issued a statement of support for the MCA leader's decision to contest against Mr Lee Lam Thye.

Datuk Yap said the DAP should be taught a lesson for their "arrogant and provocative

attitude towards MCA leaders".

He said the MCA Youth had instructed all its divisions and branches to make preparations for the by-elections in the three constituencies Seputeh, Bukit Bintang and Hulu Langat.

In a statement, Mr Lee Lam Thye reiterated his decision to present himself at Parliament house on May 11 with Seputeh MP Liew Ah Kim to wait for Mr Lee Kim Sai to submit their letters of resignation to the Speaker.

"If Lee Kim Sai and the MCA are so eager to have a contest as reflected by their pronouncements, I see no reason why he is not prepared to submit his letter of resignation together with us instead of insisting on May 19, which he knows is a holiday."

Mr Lee Lam Thye said Speaker Tan Sri Mohamed Zahir Ismail, whom he contacted this morning by telephone, was "prepared to meet us on May 11 to accept the letters."

"He also confirmed that he will not be in Parliament on May 19 because it is a public holiday."

DAP Wanita national secretary Dr Oon Hong Geok said the contest should proceed so as to decide which party has the support of the Chinese community.