

Dr M: It's a decision only the Barisan (P) can make

6 MAY 1989

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the question of MCA deputy president Lee Kim Sai vacating his seat should be left to the Barisan Nasional leadership.

"The question is not a right of the individual. It should be referred to the party (Barisan). Let the party decide," *Utusan Malaysia* quoted the Prime Minister and Barisan chairman as telling reporters after m-ayers at the Masiid Solehin Latihan Polis here.

Dr Mahathir said this when asked to comment on the Labour Minister's decision to accept DAP deputy secretary-general Lee Lam Thye's challenge to contest in Seputeh.

Two days ago, Mr Lee Kim Sai, the MP for Hulu Langat, accepted the Bukit Bintang MP's challenge to be in Parliament House at 10am on May 19 to tender their resignation from their respective seats.

Mr Lee Lam Thye, who said the DAP MP for Seputeh, Mr Liew Ah Kim, would also be at the House to tender his resignation, has now changed the date for submitting their resignation to May 11 as May 19 is a public holiday while Mr Lee Kim Sai is sticking to the original date.

Today, Mr Lee Lam Thye said in a statement that he and Mr Liew will be at Par-

liament at 10am on May 11.

"I have phoned Dewan Speaker Tan Sri Zahir Ismail this morning and he told me he is prepared to meet the MPs on May 11 and accept our resignation letters," he said.

Tan Sri Zahir, confirming that Mr Lee Lam Thye called him, said: "I told him that if they come on May 11, I will be in my office."

He said they could hand in their letters through a third party "so long as I reasonably believe that it came from them."

On whether he would accept their letters, he said: "We have no alternative but to accept. Under the Constitution we have no right not to."

Meanwhile, Umno vice-president Anwar Ibrahim said the two Lees should call off the proposed contest as it would not benefit the people.

"It is unnecessary for Mr Lee Kim Sai to respond (to the DAP challenge) as the people had accepted the Barisan government," the Education Minister said in an interview in Penang.

He said the matter should, instead, be referred to the Barisan Supreme Council as the challenge involved a Barisan seat.

Encik Anwar urged the two Lees to wait for the next general election if they insisted on challenging each other.

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