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KUALA LUMPUR, JULY 18, (BERNAMA) -- PRIME MINISTER DATUK SERI DR MAHATHIR MOHAMAD HAS EXPRESSED HAPPINESS OVER THE SETTLEMENT OF THE MCA LEADERSHIP TUSSLE YESTERDAY; MCA PRESIDENT DATUK SERI DR LING LIONG SIK SAID TODAY.

HE SAID THE PRIME MINISTER WAS IN +A JOVIAL MOOD+ AND WAS +HAPPY+ THAT THE MCA HAD MANAGED TO REACH AN AMICABLE SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM THROUGH A +NO-CONTEST FOR THE PARTY TOP POST.+

MCA DEPUTY PRESIDENT DATUK LEE KIM SAI, WHO HAD ANNOUNCED HIS DECISION TO CHALLENGE DATUK SERI DR LING IN THE PARTY POLLS, SAID YESTERDAY THAT HE HAD MADE A FINAL DECISION NOT TO CONTEST.

DATUK LEE WILL INSTEAD RETAIN HIS POST AS DEPUTY PRESIDENT.

DATUK SERI DR LING, WHO EARLIER ATTENDED THE WEEKLY CABINET MEETING, ALSO TOLD REPORTERS THAT OTHER CABINET MINISTERS HAD ALSO SHOWERED THE MCA LEADERS WITH CONGRATULATIONS. -- MORE  
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THE MCA, HE SAID, WOULD GET DOWN TO WORK QUICKLY TO PREPARE FOR THE GENERAL ELECTION.

HE SAID HE WOULD GO ON A NATION-WIDE TOUR TO FURTHER EXPLAIN THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN THE MCA TO THE PARTY DELEGATES WHO WILL ATTEND ITS ANNUAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON JULY 28-29.

HE REITERATED THAT THE ISSUES BROUGHT UP AGAINST HIM DURING THE RECENT PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN WERE A +BLESSING IN DISGUISE+ AS HE HAD HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO CLARIFY HIS POSITION THROUGH THE PRESS.

ON HOW THE PARTY REACHED THE DECISION FOR A NO-CONTEST FOR THE PRESIDENT'S POST, DATUK SERI DR LING SAID THE PARTY CENTRAL COMMITTEE, WHICH MET YESTERDAY TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE, WERE INTERESTED IN PARTY UNITY.

+WE BROKE INTO SMALLER GROUPS AMONG OURSELVES (THE CC MEMBERS) AND DISCUSSED THE MATTER IN THE INTEREST OF PARTY UNITY. WE SAT BACK TOGETHER LATER AND WE AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD NOT BE A CONTEST,+ HE SAID. -- BERNAMA  
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