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Mahathir - New Year

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 15, (Bernama) -- The appointment of a parliamentary secretary to the Home Affairs Ministry is to assist in its administration, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

+There is no specific reason,+ he said when asked by reporters for comments on the appointment of Encik Ong Ka Ting, MCA MP for Pontian, to the post.

The appointment of Encik Ong, who is now Parliamentary Secretary to the Health Ministry, and two other parliamentary secretaries was announced yesterday. The other two are Dr Sak Cheng Lum (Ministry of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs) and Datuk K. Kumaran (Ministry of Health).

This is the first time in many years that the Home Affairs Ministry is having a Parliamentary Secretary.

+The fact that we have not had one for many years does not mean that we cannot have one now,+ the Prime Minister said at the MCA Chinese New Year Open House at the party headquarters here.

+I think it is important that we also have an MCA man there. This is part of the Barisan Nasional concept,+ said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is also the Home Affairs Minister.

The ministry at present has a deputy minister (Datuk Megat Junid Megat Ayob). -- more

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Mahathir - New Year 2 Kuala Lumpur

Asked whether Umno was also going to Sarawak now that it was spreading its wings to Sabah, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, who is also Umno President, said the party had no such plans.

+We are going to Sabah only,+ he said.

The traditional MCA open house was hosted by MCA leaders headed by party President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, who is also Transport Minister.

A steady stream of Malaysians including leaders of other BN component parties started calling at the MCA headquarters since 9am to wish the MCA leaders and members +Gong Xi Fa Cai+ and savour New Year delicacies.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir, his wife Datuk Seri Datin Paduka Dr Siti Hasmah and their two children -- Mazhar and Maizuri -- arrived at 10.40 am and were greeted by a lion dance. -- Bernama

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