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MCA-Ling

MAKE CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF ROLE IN DEVELOPMENT, URGES DR LING

KUALA LUMPUR, July 6 (Bernama) -- MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik today urged Malaysians to make a critical appraisal of their role in Malaysia's new development phase.

He said the Seventh Malaysia Plan which contained development programmes that would bring society into the new century, required of the people to set new priorities and objectives.

Malaysians should heed the new challenges contained in the Seventh Plan so that Malaysia could march forward to a greater level of economic excellence, he said when addressing the 43rd annual MCA General Assembly at Wisma MCA, Jalan Ampang, here.

The assembly was opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who is also Barisan Nasional Chairman.

Dr Ling, who is Transport Minister, said through its economic strategies, the MCA would step up activities to help Malaysians enhance their economic performance.

"The MCA will continue to assist the business community tap new opportunities in the fields of trade, investment and tourism," said Dr Ling who has been returned unopposed as MCA president for another three-year term.

Apart from informing the people about the government's policies and programmes to promote trade and investment, the MCA would also encourage business associations and guilds to look into new business opportunities.

The MCA would expand its Langkawi education project to cover more needy students with the aim of creating a bigger pool of skilled and trained manpower, he said.

MCA members had been asked to indentify poor students from all races in their localities and find ways to help them.

The MCA's University Students Community Service Project would also from now on involve students in teacher training colleges, polytechnics and private colleges, Dr Ling said.

Dr Ling said the MCA's Tunku Abdul Rahman (TAR) College had produced technical and semi-professional workers who were much needed in an expanding economy.

He also wanted Wanita MCA to be ready to play a more significant role in all fields in view of the emphasis on women's role in national development as contained in the Seventh Plan.

"The MCA has resolved that by the year 2010, 30 per cent of the party's local authority councillors would be women," he said.

Towards this end, the MCA not only wanted women to be involved directly in politics but also needed the support and understanding of Chinese men in encouraging their wives, daughters and female companions to enter politics, he said.

Dr Ling also wanted the MCA Youth to play a more active role in ensuring Malaysian youths had ethics, religious fervour and high morals by holding various programmes.

"I hope even as our economy expands and progresses, our people will have even stronger social and spiritual values," he said.

Dr Ling said the MCA had recently set up a Religious Affairs Bureau to help instill noble values and strengthen cooperation and understanding among religious bodies in Malaysia.

He urged Malaysians to be wary of religious extremists as they were a

threat to unity and harmony in this country.

Dr Ling urged the Chinese community to cooperate with all races in the country in the quest for attainment of national objectives.

The two-day assembly is being attended by more than 2,000 MCA delegates from Peninsular Malaysia and Sabah. -- BERNAMA

AFY AAM