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Ling-Population

MCA TO DISCUSS CHINESE FERTILITY PROBLEM

KUALA LUMPUR, July 7 (Bernama) -- MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today that the party will hold a brain storming session soon to identify the reasons why Chinese families have few children.

"We are going for a brain storming session and are inviting Chinese community leaders, academicians and others concerned over the declining Chinese population in Malaysia," he said after winding up the 43rd MCA General Assembly at Wisma MCA here.

He said this when commenting on the issue which was brought up by most delegates during the assembly.

Earlier Health Minister Datuk Chua Jui Meng said his ministry forecast that the Chinese population would decline from the present 27 per cent to 13 per cent of the total population by the year 2060.

Dr Ling also said that the MCA would invite experts to advise whether this trend was due to economic factors or the fertility of Chinese people.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had said that Malaysia could support a population of 70 million.

Asked to comment on the seven appointed central working committee (CWC) members, Dr Ling said : "I'm still thinking about it, although I have already decided on it but according to the party constitution I need to discuss it with other elected CWC members first."

Asked whether he would appoint those who lost, Dr Ling said he planned to appoint some new blood to the CWC but at the moment he was keeping his options open.

Dr Ling also said he would make a five-day working visit to Laos and Myanmar from tomorrow to discuss the possibility of the proposed TransAsian Railway going through these two countries.

The present proposal for the railway is from Singapore to Kunming in China, via Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok, Phnom Penh, Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi.

He also planned to discuss with Myanmar officials ways in which Malaysian port operators could help that country.

"Last year, Myanmar ports experienced a 70 per cent container growth and I hope to meet them to discuss possible Malaysian assistance," Dr Ling added. -- BERNAMA

RAM YBK AAM