

# Chinese guilds back PM

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## Ling: Community wants stability to continue

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KUALA LUMPUR: Representatives from all the major Chinese guilds and associations in the country unanimously resolved yesterday to support the leadership of Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and the Barisan Nasional Government.

The decision was made after a two-and-a-half-hour dialogue session held between representatives of ten associations and the MCA which was chaired by Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik.

"It was decided unanimously that the Chinese community will continue to give 100% support to the Prime Minister and the Government to lead the country out of the economic turmoil.

"This decision was made to continue the stability maintained for so long under Dr Mahathir," the MCA president told reporters after the meeting.

Yesterday's endorsement for Dr Mahathir's leadership comes in the wake of last Monday's dialogue between the Federation of Chinese Associations (FCAM) and the Prime Minister.

At that meeting, Dr Mahathir agreed among oth-

er matters to consider building more Chinese primary schools.

Besides the FCAM, the other associations represented at yesterday's meeting were the Associated Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry; Federation of Hawkers and Petty Traders Associations; Malaysian Sundry Shop Operators Association; Malaysian Rice and Foodstuff Wholesalers Association; Malaysian

Garment Manufacturers Association; Malaysia-Singapore Coffeeshop Proprietors Federation; Pan Malaysian Restaurant Owners Federation; West Malaysian Vegetable Wholesalers Federation; and the Small and Medium Industries Association.

The meeting also saw the strengthening of the relationship between the guilds and the MCA with the setting up of a secre-

tariat to be headed by party vice-president Datuk Ong Ka Ting.

Dr Ling said the MCA and the Chinese associations would also meet on a more regular basis.

"We will meet not less than three times a year to discuss and review the situation in the country," he said.

On the Chinese schools, Dr Ling said the MCA would continue to raise

the issue at the Barisan and Cabinet level.

He explained, however, that it was already a policy to have "three in one" schools where Chinese, Tamil, and National schools would be administered independently while sharing the same facilities.

"But in areas densely populated by Chinese, there will be a Chinese school," he said.