

03 DEC 1999

Mahathir-meeting

ABDULLAH, LIONG SIK, KHALIL IN LANGKAWI TO MEET DR MAHATHIR

LANGKAWI, Dec 3 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaacob have arrived in Langkawi, reportedly to meet Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on the new Cabinet line-up.

The meeting is expected to be held at a resort here.

Abdullah, Liong Sik and Khalil have no official functions here while Dr Mahathir is here for the Langkawi International Maritime and Aerospace Exhibition (LIMA '99) which entered its fourth day today.

Dr Liong Sik, when met by Bernama, refused to confirm about the meeting.

"I will be here for two days," he said.

To another question, Dr Ling who is MCA president said the party would abide by the decision of the Barisan Nasional (BN) leadership over the post of the Pulau Pinang Chief Minister.

The MCA now has the edge over Gerakan with nine seats to eight in the Pulau Pinang State Legislative Assembly.

Gerakan's 10 seats were reduced to eight when two of its assemblymen, Lim Chein Aun (Bayan Lepas) and Lim Boo Chang (Datuk Keramat) left the party yesterday, citing unhappiness with the party leadership among the reasons.

Chien Aun is the son of former Chief Minister Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu while Boo Chang is the son of a founding member of Gerakan, Datuk Lim Ee Heong.

"MCA will abide by whatever decision made by Dr Mahathir as the BN chairman because MCA is a disciplined party and holding on the principles of the BN," he said.

However, Dr Ling refused to comment whether the MCA already had a candidate in mind for the post.

The MCA once held the post of chief minister through Tan Sri Wong Pow Nee before Tun Dr Lim Chong Eu from Gerakan took over.

On developments in Gerakan, Dr Ling said the MCA was willing to give appropriate consideration to Chien Aun and Boo Chang if they applied to join the party to avoid them joining the opposition.

He believed this would not jeopardise cooperation among the BN component parties as it was not something new because in the past members of the BN component parties "changing rooms in the same house."

--BERNAMA

team/jm abg