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Contestants told to desist from lies and personal attacks

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Those aspiring to contest in the MCA elections in July have been advised to refrain from personal attacks or telling lies about their opponents.

Party president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, in giving the advice said: "We must refrain from creating a fractious party. It does not matter who wins or loses as party unity must reign after the contests."

Dr Ling, who is also the Transport Minister said he would seek re-election for the president's post.

"Others are also free to offer themselves and let the party delegates decide."

"The last time I was lucky ... I offered myself and everyone agreed that the nominations close for the post," he told reporters after chairing the party's first presidential council meeting at the party headquarters.

Asked whether the elections would be tense this time, he said there would be some competition but the party emphasised that it must be a competition within the family and avoid a split.

He also said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had agreed to open the party's annual general meeting on July 17.

Nominations for office bearers is on July 12.

Dr Ling also said the thrust of MCA's agenda this year is to strengthen the Barisan Nasional through a series of political and socio-economic programmes. To achieve these objectives the party will be working closely with all the Chinese guilds and associations and co-operate with all BN component parties and non-governmental organisations.

Equally important in the agenda, he added, would be the party's on-going educational projects such as the Langkawi Project and sponsoring Smart schools by the Huaren Education Foundation.

"The party will continue to provide assistance to further expand Tunku Abdul Rahman Colleges, Chinese independent schools and colleges," he said, adding that the party would ensure that funds would be made available for these projects.

Dr Ling described education as a vital component in manpower investment and what the party had done over the years also inspired others to adopt similar programmes.

He also said the party would advocate cross-cultural understanding of the various races.

There is a need, he said, to promote broader understanding of each others' cultures and customs which could lead everybody to have a better outlook as Malaysians.

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