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Dr Ling: Evil rumours being spread

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KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today it was a "disenchanted" group of people who were spreading "evil" rumours linking his intended resignation with his son's alleged business problems.

He said he had told the Prime Minister last week that he was disturbed about these rumours about his son.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had mentioned yesterday that there were rumours about Dr Ling's family matters which disturbed him (Dr Ling).

Dr Ling's son, Hee Leong, is a businessman with a wide range of interests but rumours have been rife since the economic downturn that he was in trouble.

Since Dr Ling announced his decision to resign as Transport Minister on Monday, stories have been spreading like wildfire that fugitive businessman Datuk Soh Chee Wen was about to expose him.

Soh, once a Selangor MCA leader and his close friend, has vanished since April last year when he went on the Securities Commission's wanted list for allegedly defrauding Omega Securities Sdn Bhd.

Rumours had it that Soh had made an "inch-thick" declaration complete with photocopies of cheques, that he had been arrested abroad and that the SC had obtained warrants of arrests against Dr Ling and his son.

Sources familiar with the investigations into Soh's corporate affairs have dismissed the rumours as unfounded.

On Tuesday, reporters rushed to Dr Ling's house late at night when rumours of his arrest spread.

"On that night, so many reporters came to my house, it's very sad. We (my family and I) didn't know then that reporters came for that reason.

"Only later we heard why they came, it must be to see me ...," he said, putting his wrists together as if he was being handcuffed.

Asked if he felt hurt by these rumours, Dr Ling said he had become used to it.

"It's very evil minds making very evil accusations," he told reporters at his Ministry today.

He said he was glad that the Anti-Corruption Agency had yesterday dismissed rumours that it was investigating his affairs.

"You (reporters) should go to the police and get an answer. If you ask me, I am not the police, I am not the ACA. Ask the authorities and get the right answers," he said.

He said such questions would only generate unfair suspicion.

"Be fair to me, my son and my family," he said.

He said his decision to resign was because it was "time to go".