

# MCA-Nanyang deal not my business: PM

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I neither give my support nor am I objecting, says Mahathir

**RAWANG, Mon:** The Prime Minister said today he is adopting a hands-off policy in the controversy over MCA's proposed purchase of the *Nanyang Siang Pau* and *China Press* newspapers.

Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it is not his business to look after MCA's investments nor prevent the deal from going through.

When asked for his opinion of the deal after launching the Malaysian monorail production train this afternoon, Mahathir turned to MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik who was

accompanying him and asked: "Are you (MCA) buying Nanyang?"

Ling replied: "Huaren (Management Sdn Bhd) is buying."

(Huaren is MCA's investment arm and controls *The Star* newspaper.)

On whether several senior Nanyang executives were told to resign after the takeover announcement by the MCA presidential council on Wednesday, Mahathir said: "I wouldn't know. It's not my business to look after."

Asked whether he sup-

ports the move, he said: "I neither give my support nor am I objecting."

On calls to him to intervene and stop the acquisition of the dailies, he said: "I don't see what business it is of mine to go and block deals."

Mahathir had earlier dismissed talk that the deal was politically-motivated.

"Nanyang is a newspaper. Anybody can take it over. Of course, all newspapers in Malaysia are politically motivated, even *Harakah* and *Rocket* ... but nobody minds that," he said.

"But if there is any doubt

at all about the government or a government party being involved, everybody becomes very uptight. Why don't you ask *Harakah*?"

Ling said Huaren would go ahead with the purchase if it is commercially good.

Asked whether the party would consider the protest mounted by the Committee Against Takeover of Nanyang Press by MCA, he said:

"You get conflicting reports. You get the National Union of Journalists ... the Nanyang journalists, all supporting this. Which one do you listen to?"