

Teams A and B visit separately

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PUTRAJAYA, Mon: The MCA split was obvious again this festive season when party leaders came to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Hari Raya open house in two groups yesterday.

The scenario was repeated at Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's open house at PWTC later in the afternoon.

However, conspicuously missing from both functions was youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat.

At Putrajaya, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik led one group, and his deputy, Datuk Lim Ah Lek, and her.

Ling was the first to arrive at Seri Perdana at about 11.45am with his entourage, comprising vice-presidents Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn and Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, central committee (CC) member Datuk Chor Chee Heung, Dewan Rakyat deputy speaker Datuk Lim Si Cheng, and PJ Utara division chairman Dr Wong Sai Hou.

They greeted Mahathir and his wife, Datin Seri Dr

Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali and proceeded to the hall to mingle with the other guests.

Ling and his delegation left about 30 minutes later to attend Abdullah's open house.

Lim's Team B arrived at 12.30pm with vice-presidents Datuk Chua Jui Meng and Datuk Chan Kong Choy, Wanita deputy chief Datin Paduka Tan Yee Kew, and CC member Datuk Fu Ah Kiow.

The prime minister was engaged in a long conversation with Lim. The group

left at about 1.15pm.

At Abdullah's open house, Team B, led by Lim and his spouse, were the first to arrive at about 1.40pm.

Lim was accompanied by Tan, Chua and Chan and their spouses, who took time to mingle with the other VIPs before leaving at about 2.10pm.

Shortly after they left the hall, Team A leaders arrived.

Ling was also accompanied by Transport Ministry parliamentary secretary

Donald Lim Siang Chai, and PJ Utara MP Chew Mei Fun.

It was the second occasion in recent weeks that the two teams had arrived at functions separately.

At MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu's "Deepavali open" house on Nov 14, Lim's group bypassed Ling to shake hands with Mahathir, Abdullah and Samy Vellu.

On his meeting with Ong in Kedah on Thursday, Mahathir said: "He (Ong) said he really does not want to make it an issue."