

Stop open feud now, Mohamed urges MCA men

570K 25712/2001
KUALA LUMPUR: Barisan Nasional secretary-general Tan Sri Mohamed Rahmat advised feuding MCA leaders yesterday to shelve their plans for roadshows and immediately stop their war of words through the media.

He said for them to persist in the open feud would widen the rift within the party and obscure any effort to resolve the problem.

Worse still, he said, if those involved continued with what they planned to do, Barisan might end up paying a heavy price in the impending Indera Kayangan by-election.

"For the sake of Barisan and the country, they must cancel their plans to hold roadshows and immediately cease their war of words through the media. There is nothing to be gained by engaging in public bickering when an amicable solution can be found through mediation and discussion among themselves.

"This is not a question of who is right or wrong. If everyone starts insisting he is right and tries to induce the grassroots into taking sides, this problem will never end and we may lose the Indera Kayangan seat," he warned.

Mohamed said that as the second biggest party in the coalition, a strong and united MCA was crucial to ensure the people continue to sup-

port Barisan.

MCA leaders, he said, should learn from Umno's past experience so that they would not make the same mistakes.

In another development, Barisan chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said MCA leaders who were at loggerheads with each other would always remain loyal to Barisan despite their current spat.

"They will not act in any way that can undermine the stability and strength of the coalition because they are very loyal to Barisan.

"I am confident this problem can be resolved and will not end up with any one of them forming another party.

"This internal problem is not really that serious as it only involves personality clashes," Dr Mahathir said after opening PNB Galeri.

He said what was happening within the MCA was nothing like the leadership crisis Umno faced in 1987 that culminated with Teuku Razeleigh Hamzah setting up the now-defunct Parti Melayu Semangat 46.

Asked to comment on the plan by the opposition to use the rift within MCA as ammunition in Indera Kayangan, Dr Mahathir said: "That is only to be expected. What else can they offer except say bad things about other people?"