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Ah Lek: Only way is to give up stake

SEREMBAN, Wed. - MCA deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek said the only way to resolve the issue of the Nanyang Press Holdings is for the party to give up its shares in Nanyang.

Lim said he heeded the call by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to end the Nanyang controversy in the interests of the party.

Speaking to reporters after briefing the MCA grassroots on his stand on the Nanyang purchase, Lim said:

"My stand on this issue is in the interests of the party and how it would be adversely affected by the Nanyang purchase.

"I understand the feelings of the Chinese community and would not want the party to be at loggerheads with the community, which will happen if MCA keeps Nanyang in its stable."

Lim said he was looking at how this ill feeling between the party and the community, which had so far given its full support to the party, would affect the outcome of the 2004 general election.

He said the Chinese community was close-knit and it would never want its newspapers to be controlled by a political party.

Lim said the negative sentiments would also badly affect the Barisan Nasional come election time.

"I have been in politics for 30 years and I know the pulse of the community and that is why I am opposing this takeover of Nanyang by the party.

"I have to do this for the good of the party, community and BN as a whole."

(END)