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Chua-Nanyang

CHUA HAS RESERVATIONS OVER TAKEOVER OF NANYANG AND CHINA PRESS

KLANG, June 3 (Bernama) -- MCA vice president Datuk Chua Jui Meng said today that he has strong reservations over the takeover of Nanyang Siang Pau and China Press by the party.

"Even when I was in Europe, I did have strong reservations over the takeover and I have made my stand clear that I do not support the move," he said.

Chua, who is also Health Minister, said this to reporters when asked to comment on the matter after flagging off participants of the Walkaton Rakyat 2001 here.

Some 1,500 people participated in the walkathon jointly organised by 11 MCA branches including the Bandar Klang and Jalan Tepi Sungai branches in the Klang MCA division.

Chua is among eight MCA leaders who opposed the move discussed at the party's central committee meeting on Wednesday.

In opposing the move, Chua has said that any company wanting to buy assets of such a big size and magnitude requires the trustees and shareholders to agree first but at the meeting he was told that it was not necessary for a shareholders' meeting to discuss the purchase, costing RM230 million.

Chua has also said the takeover would affect the future of MCA as a component of the Barisan Nasional and party leaders had to ensure that the Chinese community was not antagonised by the move.

He also questioned whether it was desirable for the party to conduct an economic exercise against the wishes of the people. He hoped that good sense would prevail over the takeover.

Chua also criticised some MCA leaders who have stated that he (Chua) supported the takeover, saying that based on his reservations, he did not support the idea of the takeover of the two newspapers.

Asked about Tun Daim Zainuddin's resignation as the finance minister, Chua said he (Daim) had contributed significantly to the growth of the nation especially during the economic crisis.

In expressing appreciation for Daim's contribution, he said Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Daim were two pillars of the nation who have contributed immensely for the economic growth of the country.

In his speech earlier, Chua said studies conducted by the Health Ministry showed that only 30.9 per cent of Malaysian adults 18 years and above exercised and only 11.6 per cent exercised adequately.

He also said the study also showed that the rate of exercise increased with one's educational level, ranging from 13.9 per cent among those with no formal education to 51.4 per cent among those with tertiary education.

This, Chua said, implies the importance of education in moulding a healthy lifestyle.

The findings, he said, also showed that only 27.8 per cent of those in rural areas exercised opposed to 33.4 per cent among urban people.

This, Chua said, could be due to better access to sports facilities and organised activities in the urban area.

He said his ministry would conduct another study in 2004 to reassess the trend among the rural and urban population to exercise.

-- BERNAMA

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