

23 JUN 2001

Ling-EGM

DON'T BE SWAYED BY OTHER ISSUES, SAYS DR LING

KUALA LUMPUR, June 23 (Bernama) -- MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik today reminded delegates to the party's extraordinary general meeting (EGM) tomorrow to only discuss the Nanyang Press Holdings Bhd takeover issue.

They should not allow themselves to be swayed by any other issues, he said.

The now controversial purchase of Nanyang Press by the party's investment arm, Huaren Holdings Sdn Bhd is the only issue to be decided by the 1,516 delegates to the EGM, he told reporters here today.

"There is only one issue to decide like all other EGMs. To buy or not to buy (endorse the takeover) Nanyang Press Holdings and within the same resolution to allow the Huaren Holdings board to seek strategic partners or to divest any reasonable portion to achieve good benefit for the whole group," he said.

Ling, who is also Transport Minister, was approached after opening the annual general meeting of Koperasi Serbaguna Malaysia Berhad (KSM) at Wisma MCA here on what would be his message to the delegates at tomorrow's EGM.

Ling said: "My advice to them is to keep cool... keep calm. So don't allow other issues to cloud this (Nanyang deal)."

Ling was also asked about Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's comment yesterday that he did not issue any directive to MCA to buy over Nanyang Press and only gave the party green light to do so.

"The prime minister's statement is very clear (that) he did not direct anybody to buy. Those twisting his statement are not fair to the prime minister... not fair to anybody," he said.

Nanyang Press publishes two Chinese-language newspapers namely the Nanyang Siang Pau and the China Press.

Earlier in his speech, Ling said he was aware that some party members were very worried about the takeover and opposed the deal as evident by the objection from a group by his deputy Datuk Lim Ah Lek.

"This EGM is the highest mechanism to settle the problem. My hope is that after the EGM, the MCA will be 100 per cent united," Ling added.

-- BERNAMA

RV HS RYN