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MCA-Ong

PM'S ADVICE VERY TIMELY, SAYS ONG

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 24 (Bernama) -- MCA Youth Chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat has described as very timely advice by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir to MCA leaders to swallow their pride and not be too hard on one another.

Ong, who is also Youth and Sports Deputy Minister, said his sincere wish is to see the party leaders heeding the Prime Minister's advice.

"I've given my assurance to the Prime Minister that I will abide by any advice he gives," he told reporters at the ministry here today.

He was responding to Dr Mahathir's remarks last night after being asked by reporters on the crisis in the MCA and its decision to suspend the youth wing's central committee headed by Ong.

Dr Mahathir noted that the two sides seemed unwilling to compromise and he thought that at times there was a need for people to swallow their pride.

Dr Mahathir, who had also spoken to both Ong and MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, said he had asked both of them not to be too hard on each other.

Given the Prime Minister's vast experience in politics, Ong said his advice would certainly enlighten the MCA members in overcoming the prevailing problems.

"I tried to call Prime Minister's office today. I'm looking forward to meet the him after this," he said.

Ong said that besides the MCA youth problem, he would also discuss with Dr Mahathir matters pertaining to Chinese youths especially some programmes directed at the group.

"I do not wish to see such programmes been aborted because of the Youth wing's suspension. I would certainly continue my works as well as my capacity as vice-chairman of the BN Youth," he said.

On MCA's preparation for the Indera Kayangan by-election, Ong said he would go to Perlis with party members from the various states tomorrow to prepare the BN campaign in the constituency.

Commenting on the opposition front's statement that they would capitalise the MCA crisis in their campaign, Ong said it showed that the opposition was running out of issues.

"This shows that the opposition parties are practising parasite politics and they do not have their own agenda," he said.

Ong was also asked on the possibility of taking legal action against the veteran committee on their findings, naming him, Youth Assembly Speaker Lim Hong Sang and Youth Secretary General Yew Teong Look responsible for the fracas on Aug 3.

He said he had consulted his lawyer on the matter but decided to defer taking any legal action after considering the macro perspective of the issue, especially within the context of Barisan Nasional.

"I will give them the time and opportunity to retract. That is why I am holding back the legal action even before the demise of Datuk Khor Liang Tee, the Perlis state assemblyman for Indera Kayangan," he said.

Ong said that what surprised him was that until now the veteran committee had not lodged a police report that he had planned the youth fracas on Aug 3.

-- BERNAMA

AT MFJ ABG

