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MCA-Rift

RIFT BETWEEN DR LING, LIM STILL EVIDENT

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 14 (Bernama) -- Differences between MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and his deputy Datuk Lim Ah Lek are still evident judging by the way they gave each other the cold shoulder at a Deepavali function today.

They were seen not talking to each other at the Deepavali open house hosted by Works Minister and MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu at the Chung Hwa Independent Secondary School in Jalan Ipoh here.

They arrived separately for the open house with their own delegations of MCA leaders.

Dr Ling was accompanied by vice-president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Wanita Chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen, Central Committee (CC) members Datuk Tan Chai Ho, Datuk Chor Chee Heung and Donald Lim Siang Chai.

About 30 minutes later, Lim arrived with his group comprising vice-presidents Datuk Chua Jui Meng and Datuk Chan Kong Choy, CC member Datuk Fu Ah Kiow and Deputy Wanita Head Datin Paduka Dr Tan Yee Kew.

Lim shook hands and extended greetings to Samy Vellu, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and his wife Datin Seri Dr Siti Hasmah Mohd Ali but not Dr Ling and his wife Datin Seri Ena Ling who were sitting at the same table with Samy Vellu.

Chua also exchanged greetings with Dr Mahathir, Abdullah, Samy Vellu and his wife Datin Seri Indrani.

When asked on the matter, Dr Ling, who is Transport Minister, said: "I'm confident the misunderstanding can be resolved, it's only temporary."

Lim, when approached by reporters, refused to comment.

Dr Mahathir, when asked to comment on the same matter, said it was MCA's internal affairs and he was confident the party could solve its own problems.

Asked if the rift among MCA leaders would erode the Chinese community's support for the Barisan Nasional (BN), he said: "I think it should not drag on, they are sensible people and I'm quite sure they want to settle their problems."

Dr Mahathir was also asked on his earlier advice to MCA leaders to close ranks and not resort to witch-hunt after the party's Extraordinary General Meeting on the purchase of Nanyang Siang Pau and China Press which seemed to have been ignored.

He said the press too had a role to play and it should not write too much to the extent of complicating matters.

-- BERNAMA

AT ZS TS