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Tee Keat: I met PM to explain Aug 3 fracas

KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs. - MCA Youth chief Datuk Ong Tee Keat said he met Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Dec 13 to give his side of the story on the movement's Aug 3 annual general assembly fracas.

Ong, accused in the party veterans' report of premeditating the ruckus, said he needed to clear the air over the unfair and baseless accusation.

Asked if Dr Mahathir accepted his explanation, Ong said: "The Prime Minister said kind words and gave some advice."

Ong, who is also Deputy Youth and Sports Minister, was speaking at a Press conference at the ministry, hours before the party's central committee (CC) met.

He added that he had earlier submitted a copy of a report on the fracas prepared by deputy secretary-general Liow Tiong Lai to Dr Mahathir, who is the Barisan Nasional chairman.

When pressed to divulge details of the encounter, Ong said: "I have already said that it was a sembang peribadi (private discussion). I treasure the classified and privileged information."

Ong also denied speculations that he had gone into hiding after the meeting with Dr Mahathir because he had been reprimanded and censured by the Prime Minister.

He said he had already planned his leave much earlier and one day after the meeting with Dr Mahathir, went on leave in China. Ong returned this morning.

Asked to comment on views that he should not have dragged Dr Mahathir into MCA's internal problems, Ong said it was an unfair statement because his detractors did not know details of his meeting with the Prime Minister.

On a document outlining 52 reasons why Ong was responsible for the problems in the wing, he said there was no need for him to rebut all of them.

"If this is their (his opponent's) way of doing things, then, let the delegates decide on this," he added.

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