

# Mahathir steps in

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## BN chairman to meet Ling and Lim to resolve bitter feud

**KOTA BARU:** Barisan Nasional chairman Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will meet the leaders of MCA's rival factions to resolve the problem that is threatening to split the party.

The meeting would be held "any time now", said the prime minister who leaves for a seven-day visit to Morocco, Libya and Bahrain tomorrow.

"I think misunderstandings such as this will not bring any benefit and I believe they can settle the matter through negotiations," he told a press conference during his one-day visit to Kelantan yesterday.

Shortly after Mahathir made known his intention, MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and deputy president Datuk

Lim Ah Lek said they welcome the move and would wait for the BN chief's call.

The problem that has plagued the MCA since last year has divided the party into Team A led by Ling and Team B led by Lim.

Team B wants the June party elections postponed for the membership list to be "cleaned" of phantom members and has called for an extraordinary general meeting.

MCA headquarters has rejected the EGM requisition, saying that it is backed by less than the required one third of the 2,384 delegates after several who signed the petition backed out. But Team B is going ahead and has scheduled it for April 21.

On Thursday, Lim said the rift between him and Ling is irreconcilable and that their

occasional public display of unity was just a show. Ling insists they are still friends and that Lim is also "a family friend of the MCA".

"We believe that PM has a solution on the ongoing feud between him and Lim," Ling said in statement yesterday.

He believes in Mahathir who he considers to be the father of BN. "As a father, he has the right to be involved in the dispute between the children," he said.

Lim also welcomed the initiative, saying it is a relief that Mahathir has decided to come in to resolve the party problem.

"I am relieved ... the prime minister's vast experience would be able to solve the problem as we (MCA leaders) are unable to solve them ourselves."