

Dr Mahathir's advice to MCA leaders

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PUTRAJAYA, Wed. The MCA must always put the interest of the Chinese community ahead of everything else, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today.

"Party leaders should realise that winning or losing is not important; it is more important that MCA wins and the Chinese community wins," he said.

The Prime Minister was speaking to a 500-large crowd from 200 Chinese guilds and associations who had gathered at Laman Perdana on the grounds of his office.

He was glad that the his "peace formula" was accepted, and reminded the party leadership to stay united and to accept leadership renewal.

"I have been speaking to them (party leadership) and I have been told that 90 per cent of the members have accepted the single list of

candidates," he added.

Dr Mahathir said when the party's leadership crisis began, he had tried to stay away as there would be people who would not appreciate him interfering in the issue.

"However, as the leader of the coalition, when it became clear that they could not resolve the problems themselves, I merely made some suggestions and I am happy that they have received the peace formula," he said.

"Umno has had its own problems before, and I know how difficult it is to resolve these problems," he said.

Dr Mahathir was pleasantly surprised at the magnitude of support, as he did not expect to be credited for his efforts in settling the party's internal problems.

He said the MCA was the most senior partner of Umno and also the second largest party within the

coalition.

The associations representing a membership of 500,000 people nationwide were present to express their appreciation of the Prime Minister's peace formula which resolved the leadership crisis.

Spokesman Thomas Leong from the Malaysian Hainanese Graduates and Professionals Guild said the peace formula should not be viewed as interference by Umno, and any such opinion was "nonsensical".

He presented Dr Mahathir a Chinese calligraphy scroll with a Chinese proverb which read "When the noble horse embarks on a mission, it achieves great success".

He said the scroll was very meaningful as the Mandarin character for horse or "Mah" sounded the same as the first syllable of Dr Mahathir's name, and represented his success in settling the problem.