Dr Ling brushes aside quit rumours

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■ By FOONG PEK YEE

SEPANG: MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said he is very confident of his position in the party and will continue to serve the people and nation.

The Transport Minister stressed that his major concern now was to help the Government re-stimulate the nation's economy and implement the party's constructive agenda, particularly in education.

He was asked to comment on his party position in the wake of intense rumours in the past few days over his impending resignation from the party and Cabinet.

"The (MCA) central committee, vast majority of members and the ground appreciate my work. I will continue with the positive and constructive agenda that has been set for the party.

"The nation's economy is very important," said Dr Ling, on returning from a two-day official trip to the Philippines here yesterday.

Rumours over Dr Ling's resignation were rife despite MCA's peace plan, based on Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's agenda for peace and stability last month, which provided status quo for all party leaders from the division onwards, to end a 14-month-long power tussle.

Internet newspaper *Malaysiakini* in what it claimed was an exclusive story on Friday, had claimed that Dr Ling and his deputy Datuk Lim Ah Lek had within the last two weeks under the Prime Minister's peace plan, signed a memorandum to step down at least three months before the general election.

Dr Mahathir, who returned from an official five-day trip to Japan and South Korea on Friday, said Dr Ling had not

The Barisan Nasional chairman also described the rumour mongers as "people with bad motives," saying he did not know the motives for this kind of talk.

"It is up to the people as whether to listen to malicious rumours from evil-minded people or the truth from the Prime Minister who decides (on Cabinet appointments).

"I am grateful to the Prime Minister for clearing the air. So, I hope whatever confusion that has been created by this evil-minded people will disappear because it is their intention to create confusion," said Dr Ling.

On whether he knew the identity of the culprits and his advice for them, Dr Ling said it was unfair to accuse anybody without proof.

"I think they are pathological liars. They are sick in the mind. I don't think advice will do them any good. They have been lying for years," he said, adding that he was confident MCA members were mature and would not be affected by them.

"Members want peace, stability and a constructive-cum-positive agenda. I waste no time on negative agenda.

"The country's economy is very important. The party's education agenda is very important. Sabah's Tunku Abdul Rahman College branch campus is coming up while Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) will open on June 17.

"The work has just begun and it is not at the end. There is so much urgent and important work waiting for us to do," said Dr Ling.

Asked if he would defend his Labis Parliamentary seat, Dr Ling said: "I will continue as long as people want my service. There is a certain way