

Selection of veteran leaders welcomed

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PETALING JAYA: Several MCA leaders have lauded the party leadership's decision to appoint veterans to the disciplinary committee as it would ensure neutrality in handling party matters.

They said it was also in line with Umno which appoints veterans to the disciplinary committee and that MCA could learn from Umno.

Central committee member Datuk Chor Chee Heung said the disciplinary committee must ensure neutrality and integrity.

"The disciplinary committee is to sit in judgment of complaints and must be least connected to any factions. The veterans are knowledgeable. They will not only be fair but also be seen to be fair," he said.

MCA vice-president Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said, based on the current problems faced by the party, they had to learn from Umno as the appointment of veterans to head the disciplinary committee would invoke the respect from party members.

Umno disciplinary committee is chaired by Tengku Tan Sri Ahmad Rithaudeen, the former foreign and defence minister, and comprises 20 professional and veteran members.

It reports to the management committee headed by Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who in turn reports to the supreme council.

The MCA central committee had dropped deputy president Datuk Lim Ah Lek as the party's disciplinary committee chairman on Thursday.

Five MCA veterans were appointed to the disciplinary committee, including Datuk Kam Woon Wah as its chairman.

Lim protested the move, saying that the peace plan by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to end the party's 14-month-long leadership tussle between Team A (led by Dr Ling) and Team B (led by Lim) in May had provided status quo for appointed posts.

Federal Territory liaison committee member Farn Seong Than pointed out that 30 of the central committee members voted for it against six

who opposed.

Youth secretary-general Loh Seng Kok said the appointment of veterans had been practised by Umno and thus was nothing new.

In Penang, state MCA chairman Wong Kam Hoong urged members to give the veterans a chance to prove themselves.

State MCA secretary Datuk Koay Kar Huah said the revamp should not be seen as unfair because it was decided by the majority of the, central committee members.

In Ipoh, **FOONG THIM LENG** reported Perak MCA chairman Datuk Ong Ka Chuan saying that the peace plan was meant to ensure smooth party elections.

"There should be new developments since the elections was over.

"The central committee should have the freedom to decide on some new appointments as what had happened in the state, division and branch levels," he said.

Ong pointed out that Lim's term (as disciplinary committee chairman) had expired and the revamp should not be construed as removing him from the post.