

SUN 18 DEC 2002

Ling: I discussed suspension with PM

IPOH: MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said yesterday he had always consulted Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad before making any decision on the Barisan Nasional's or MCA's internal problems.

The practice of getting the prime minister's advice was good and beneficial to the MCA as Mahathir is the BN chairman with a broad perspective, Bernama reported him as saying.

"Dr Mahathir is the Bapa BN and always wise in his views," he said after jointly opening the ACP Industries Bhd (ACPI) factory with Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Tajol Rosli Ghazali at Lahat, near here.

"I met with the prime minister and discussed with him the indefinite suspension of the two members of the

Penang legislative assembly."

ACPI makes concrete railway sleepers for the Rawang-Ipoh double track project.

On Monday, the MCA Presidential Council suspended the member for Jawi, Tan Cheng Liang, and the member for Datuk Keramat, Lim Boo Chang, indefinitely for abstaining from voting on a DAP motion opposing the construction of the Penang Outer Ring Road at the Penang state assembly on Nov 21.

Ling said the suspension of the two would not weaken Penang BN in the next general election as the coalition is highly resilient.

"The BN has survived all types of crises in the past and emerged stronger. I am confident the BN strength will not be eroded by the problems related to the

two members," he said.

The issue of the two representatives need not be raised again as a decision has been made and implemented in accordance with the MCA constitution, Ling said.

There was no opposition to the decision and it has been well received by all, he said.

Speaking in Sepang later, Ling said he was prepared to brief Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on the suspension, if necessary.

"If there's anything I need to explain to Pak Lah, I will talk to him personally," he said after witnessing the signing of an air services agreement between Malaysia and China.

Abdullah had sought further explanation on Tan's and Lim's suspension.