

24 JUN 2002
MCA-Election
LING AND LIM RETAIN MCA TOP TWO POSTS UNCONTESTED

KUALA LUMPUR, June 24 (Bernama) -- MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and his deputy, Datuk Lim Ah Lek, retained their positions in the party when nominations for the party's central, national Wanita and national Youth committees closed at the MCA headquarters here at 5pm today.

However, Dewan San Choon, where the nominations were held, saw some tense moments when a few MCA grassroot leaders also filed their nominations, defying the party's peace plan and ruling to maintain the status quo.

However, all the other nominations filed, apart from the incumbents, were rejected by the MCA Election Steering Committee which met after the close of nominations.

"The essence of the peace plan is to maintain the status quo and a single list, so we have decided to reject the other nominations...any other nominations filed apart from the single list is null and void," the committee head, Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh, told reporters after the meeting.

"This is a very extraordinary decision and the decision was made based on party unity," he said.

Ling's "challenge" came from Jalan Ampang branch chairman Lim Lik Kai who is also the Bukit Bintang MCA division committee member.

The challenge defied the party's no contest ruling following the peace plan brokered by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in April.

Another deviation from the peace plan was the fifth nomination filed for the post of vice-president, which offers only four positions.

The outsider here was Teo Kah Choi, the Bukit Bintang division organising secretary. This nomination was also declared null and void.

The MCA elects its office bearers every three years and this year is an election year. However, the MCA CC has agreed to implement the peace plan which imposes a no-contest ruling, maintaining the status quo for all incumbents from division level upwards and any vacancy can only be filled through negotiations and consensus.

The peace plan, dubbed the MCA Stability Agenda, is Dr Mahathir's agenda to end the party's power struggle between the two factions, one led by Ling and another by Lim.

To show solidarity and commitment to the peace plan, Ling was today nominated by Lim and seconded by Health Minister and MCA vice-president Datuk Chua Jui Meng, for the presidency.

The president, on his part, nominated Lim as his deputy and the nomination was seconded by Human Resources Minister Datuk Fong Chan Onn who is also the party's vice-president.

The four positions of vice-president was also retained by the incumbents -- Fong, the party's most senior veep, Chua, Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, the Housing and Local Government Minister, and Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy.

The party also retained its 25 CC members, which were elected positions.

The post of secretary-general was retained by Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh, treasurer-general Tan Sri William Chek Lin Kwai and national organising secretary Datuk Ong Ka Chuan. These positions are appointed.

Another six CC members were also appointed.

The Wanita wing of the party also maintained the status quo with Deputy

Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Ng Yen Yen leading the MCA Wanita.

For the Youth wing, several positions were left vacant after the two factions could not reach an amicable solution on who should fill the vacant seats.

MCA Youth head and Deputy Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Ong Tee Keat continues to be at the helm of the wing when he was returned unopposed.

The significant change in the wing is the creation of two secretary-general's posts so as to pacify the two factions in the party.

The two Youth secretaries general, which are appointed positions, is Liow Teong Lai, who was the former Youth deputy secretary general and former political secretary of Lim, and Loh Seng Kok, the former MCA Youth vice-president and Ling's present political secretary.

-- BERNAMA

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