

# Lessons Ling learnt from PM

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FORMER MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said he has learnt three "most precious things" in life from Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad after having served in his Cabinet for 17 years and six months, *Nanyang Siang Pau* reported yesterday.

Dr Ling, who admitted that he smoked four packets or 80 sticks of cigarettes a day prior to 1988, said he quit the habit because of Dr Mahathir's "no to smoking" advice.

"Thanks to Dr Mahathir, I have never touched a cigarette since midnight of Dec 31, 1988," Dr Ling said in an interview with the daily.

Another important thing he learnt from Dr Mahathir, which

he practised in his daily life, was to stop eating after your stomach is half-full.

Dr Ling said eating had always been difficult for a politician to control as he had to meet a lot of people daily from morning to night and usually the people would not be happy if the politician did not eat the food they served him.

"I used to struggle to finish whatever food people served me until one day Dr Mahathir told me about overeating.

"Dr Mahathir said unfinished food was a waste in the old days when people were suffering from hunger.

"He said it was a harmful thing to force yourself to finish all the food in the present day

when food is plentiful."

Being meticulous was the third most valuable thing Dr Ling had learnt from the Prime Minister.

Dr Mahathir demanded that his Cabinet Ministers be meticulous in that he wanted them to be familiar with their ministry, said Dr Ling.

He added that Dr Mahathir expected them to constantly hold inspection tours.

"In one of my inspection tours to the port I discovered that the container vessels took too much time unloading their cargo," he said.

Dr Ling said that after serving Dr Mahathir for nearly two decades he realised that Dr Mahathir was sensitive to the

feelings of other people.

"I used to say he had an antenna on his head that enabled him to 'receive' the people's feelings, their needs and frustrations," he said.

He said Dr Mahathir's leadership was characterised by his practise of fairness and equality. "No one receives too much and no one receives too little. Thus everybody is happy, contributing to national stability, development and prosperity."