

28 MAY 2003

Ling-Cabinet

LING'S RESIGNATION AS TRANSPORT MINISTER ACCEPTED BY PM

PUTRAJAYA, May 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today that Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has accepted his resignation as Transport Minister.

Dr Ling said that his resignation would however take effect when the Prime Minister announces a Cabinet reshuffle.

"I will go on leave for 30 days starting tomorrow and the Prime Minister is kind enough to approve my leave," he told reporters at his office at the Transport Ministry here.

Dr Ling said that today's Cabinet meeting was his last.

He said that Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting would be acting Transport Minister during his leave until the Cabinet reshuffle.

Dr Ling said that he submitted his undated resignation letter as Transport Minister to the Prime Minister on Aug 15, last year.

He said during his meeting with Dr Mahathir today, he reaffirmed his intention to retire and resign from the post and submitted an application letter for leave which was approved by the Prime Minister.

"The Prime Minister will choose the time to announce the Cabinet reshuffle," he said.

Dr Ling said that he was leaving office in a very happy mood, with a lot of joy and gratitude in his heart.

Reflecting on his experience in the government, Dr Ling said that he had performed his national duty and served in various posts during the last 27 years.

He served as Parliamentary Secretary, Deputy Information Minister, Deputy Education Minister and Deputy Finance Minister before being appointed Transport Minister.

Dr Ling assumed the post on Jan 7, 1986 and has served in that capacity for 17-and-a-half years.

"I always tell myself that I've served in the highest council, what more can you ask for...only gratitude and happiness," said Dr Ling, who resigned as MCA president last Friday.

He thanked the government, the MCA and other Barisan Nasional component parties for their cooperation and the Prime Minister.

"It was a very great and enlightening experience serving under Dr Mahathir as he is a very far-sighted and great leader," he said.

Despite having resigned from the Cabinet, Dr Ling said that he would always be ready to contribute in whatever way he could.

Asked about his plans, Dr Ling said that he would spend his holidays in Melbourne, doing some reading and playing golf.

Asked who will be appointed to succeed him as Transport Minister, Dr Ling said that it was the absolute prerogative of the Prime Minister.

Dr Ling also expressed his gratitude to the media for their cooperation extended to him.

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