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Ling-Relief

DR LING LIONG SIK LEAVING WITH HAPPINESS AND GRATITUDE

KUALA LUMPUR, May 24 (Bernama) -- Former MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today he left the party with great happiness and gratitude and without any regret after serving as its leader for 17 years.

He said he left after the party leadership succession had been put in place and with vast improvement in the party performance.

"When I took over the party in 1986, it was a bankrupt party, the Star (an English daily owned by the MCA) was under receivership and there was the (MCA-run) co-operative problems. But with the help of MCA leaders and members, we managed to solve all these problems," he told a press conference to explain the party leadership transition at Wisma MCA here today.

Dr Ling, 60, resigned as MCA president yesterday and was replaced by Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting. MCA deputy president Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek also stepped down and the post was filled by Datuk Chan Kong Koy. Ong and Chan were formerly vice-presidents.

"The MCA is now worth more than a billion ringgit and it was debt-free from the banks while the Star has managed to diversify its business including venturing into electronic media," Dr Ling said.

At the press conference also attended by Ong and secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh, Dr Ling explained the party's success in carrying out education projects such as the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman (Utar) and the Langkawi education project.

Dr Ling said the next thing now was to get and work together to face the general election and help the Barisan Nasional retain its victory.

On his position in the Government, Dr Ling, who is Transport Minister, said it was the absolute prerogative of the Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Ling also said he would not be contesting in the next General Election.

However he would help out in his present Labis Parliamentary constituency.

The new MCA President speaking at the same press conference said he would maintain all the present CC members including those who had also tendered their resignations.

Meanwhile, Wanita MCA expressed sadness over the resignation of Dr Ling and Lim Ah Lek.

However the contribution of both leaders over the years would always be appreciated, the movement said in a statement today.

It said Dr Ling especially would be noted for his role in promoting gender equality in the party and the government.

The movement called on all members to put aside their differences and work for a united MCA.

-- BERNAMA

HM KHY AAM