

25 MAY 2003

Mahathir-Cabinet

DR M THINKING ABOUT POSSIBLE CABINET CHANGES

LANGKAWI, May 25 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he will study whether there is a need to reshuffle the Cabinet following changes in the MCA leadership.

The prime minister said he needed to study the matter further.

"I will think about it. We tell you when we decide," he said when asked about possible changes to the Cabinet following the resignation of Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik as MCA president two days ago.

Dr Mahathir was speaking to reporters at a ceremony to welcome marathon swimmer Abdul Malik Mydin, who reached here at the end of his 48km swim from Kuala Perlis.

Dr Ling and deputy president Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek resigned from the top two posts on Friday.

The MCA Central Committee elected Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting as president and Deputy Finance Minister Datuk Chan Kong Choy as deputy president. Both were vice-presidents prior to their latest appointments.

Dr Ling said yesterday that he was leaving it to the prime minister to decide on his position in the Cabinet.

Asked on his meeting with Ong here today, Dr Mahathir said the new MCA president came to thank him.

"He met me to thank me for accepting his leadership in MCA," he said.

To a question, Dr Mahathir said he would not interfere in the internal affairs of MCA and it was up to the new leaders to resolve whatever problems there might be among members.

The resignations of Dr Ling and Lim were said to be aimed at bringing peace to the party as they had been embroiled in a leadership crisis that had split the party for the past two years.

-- BERNAMA

MZM YBY