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Najib-MCA

ENDING FACTIONAL IDENTITIES A BIG TEST FOR MCA, SAYS NAJIB

TANJUNG PENGEЛИH, Johor, May 24 (Bernama) -- Ending factional identities will be a big test for the MCA following a change in the party leadership, said Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak today.

"No more Team A and Team B and no more mention of such factional identities."

This will be the big test to see if the peace plan (of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad) is accepted by MCA members at all levels of the party," he told reporters after witnessing a passing-out parade for navy recruits at the Royal Malaysian Navy Recruit Training Centre (Pularek) here.

He was commenting on the change in the MCA leadership following the resignation of MCA President Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and his deputy, Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek yesterday.

The party's 36-member central committee unanimously voted for Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, 47, and Datuk Chan Kong Choy, 48, as president and deputy president respectively after failing to persuade Dr Ling and Lim to reconsider their decision to step down.

Najib, who is also an Umno Vice-President, said it was therefore important for MCA members to accept the leadership change and to close ranks at all levels to end factional identities.

He said the leadership change was to reunite the MCA members and the peace plan had been generally accepted by both factions as evident in the appointment of the new president and deputy president.

On Dr Ling's position as Transport Minister, he said that was the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

"That is his absolute prerogative," he said.

In KUANTAN, Information Minister Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob said Umno respected the leadership change in MCA to resolve its problems.

Speaking to reporters after chairing the inaugural meeting of the Kuantan Community College, the Umno Secretary-General described it as a positive development within the Barisan Nasional (BN).

"They feel proud for being able to achieve the peace as desired by the Prime Minister," said Khalil.

In PASIR MAS, Kelantan Umno Chief Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said the appointment of Ong and Chan would help to strengthen unity in the MCA.

"I am confident that the two leaders could reunite the party and strengthen the BN," he told reporters after opening the annual general meeting of the Parent/Teacher Association of Sekolah Menengah Sultan Ibrahim Satu.

Mustapa, who is also National Economic Action Council (NEAC) Executive Director, was confident that the leadership change would end factionalism in the MCA.

-- BERNAMA

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