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Ling-MCA

LING: UP TO MCA LEADERS TO RETIRE IF THEY FEEL THEY HAVE HAD ENOUGH

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 1 (Bernama) -- MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said it is up to the elected representatives and party leaders to retire if they feel they have served too long.

He said there were some party leaders who had expressed their intention to retire and MCA would not stop anyone from doing so.

"Those who feel that they have served enough and have trained their successors, we will accept their decision to withdraw," he said when asked if there were MCA leaders who would emulate some Umno leaders who had offered to retire from the party and government.

According to him, MCA had stipulated that leaders appointed as senators and local council members would only serve for one or two terms.

He said this at a press conference after receiving Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and other dignitaries as well as guests to the MCA Chinese New Year Open House at Wisma MCA, here today.

Dr Ling said he had confidence in the capabilities of the young MCA leaders who had been entrusted to lead the party.

"I believe that all those who will lead the MCA have been given senior positions, all have been given. All that they need to do, for example, is to choose one or two or a team who can lead the MCA for another 10 years or more when the older group (senior leaders) retire," he said.

Commenting on businessman Soh Chee Wen's RM150 million suit against him, Dr Ling said what was important to him was that his conscience was clear and he would face anything because he believed he had done nothing wrong.

Soh had recently re-filed a RM150 million suit against Linksun Avenue Sdn Bhd, a company owned by Dr Ling's son, Hee Leong and Dr Ling at the Kuala Lumpur High Court. The suit was to recover the RM150 million in cash and shares which Soh claimed he loaned to Linksun Avenue and Dr Ling to facilitate the buying of Berjaya Industrial Berhad in 1997.

Asked whether he would step down because of the allegations made by Soh, Dr Ling said: "If I have no wrongdoing, why should I be thinking of all this. But stepping down and retiring is actually what everybody must think of, nobody can stay forever."

He said he had tendered an undated resignation letter to the Prime Minister as it was the Prime Minister's prerogative to decide on how long a minister could serve.

"If he decides (to accept it) and when he decides, I'll only go with gratitude in my heart, with thankfulness in my heart, having been able to do national service for so long," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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