

23 may 2003

MCA-Resignation

MCA CENTRAL COMMITTEE REJECTS RESIGNATION OF DR LING, LIM

KUALA LUMPUR, May 23 (Bernama) -- The MCA Central Committee (CC), the party's decision-making body, today rejected the resignation of its president, Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, and his deputy, Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek.

MCA vice-president Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said that the CC discussed at length the resignation letters of both leaders and decided to reject their resignation from the top two party posts.

"In order to convey our rejection, we (CC) have established two delegations to meet up with these two leaders, simultaneously, as soon as possible, this afternoon, to convey the strong feeling of the CC members," he told reporters at Wisma MCA here.

The delegation meeting Dr Ling this afternoon will be headed by Dr Fong himself together with two other CC members, Datuk Dr Chua Soi Lek and Tan Sri William Chek.

The second delegation, to meet Lim, will be led by Datuk Fu Ah Kiow, together with Datuk Tang See Hang and Datuk Yeow Chai Tiam.

"We have adjourned the CC meeting until 8pm tonight. At that time, I sincerely hope both of them will give good news," he said.

The resignation of the two leaders is part of the peace plan formulated by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to end the 14-month leadership crisis in MCA.

The party faces a leadership crisis resulting in the creation of two factions -- Team A consists of Dr Ling's supporters while Team B supports Lim.

Asked what if neither leaders declined to withdraw their decisions, Fong, who is also Human Resources Minister, said: "We do not want to speculate. The CC has mandated the two delegations to do their job."

He also said that the CC's decision to reject the resignations did not mean that the committee was against the peace plan mooted by the Prime Minister.

"No, the CC members have expressed their wish and we have mandated the two delegations to convey to the two leaders the strong feeling of the CC. We want them to continue to lead the party," he said.

He said that both leaders have not only contributed much to the MCA but also to the Barisan Nasional (BN).

"The CC feels that these two leaders have contributed tremendously not only to the MCA but also to the BN in the past, and there is no reason why we can't have a new beginning under these two leaders," he added.

Meanwhile, MCA secretary-general Datuk Seri Dr Ting Chew Peh said that according to the party's constitution, it was not necessary for the CC to decide on who would be the successor of the party's top posts tonight.

"According to the MCA constitution, if they still stick to their decision to resign, the CC has the power to fill both vacancies until the next party election," he said.

According to him, any of the CC members could be appointed to assume the top two posts in the party and their appointment would be valid until the next party election in 2005.

He also said that whatever decision made by the CC tonight, the CC would give its fullest support to whoever was chosen as the party's new president and deputy president.

-- BERNAMA

RAM AHH RM