

11 JAN 2003

Ling-Post

NO PLAN TO QUIT AS PRESIDENT UNTIL SUCCESSION ISSUE SETTLED - DR LING

KAMPAR, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik said today he has no plans to resign as the party chief but willing to go if the succession issue can be solved before his term expires in 2005.

At the moment, Dr Ling said he had no plans on his mind to resign before his term ended as important milestones had to be achieved, among them, the succession problem.

"But, if for example, you achieve the succession problem by Jan 2005, then I am ready to go," he told reporters after inspecting the preparations for tomorrow's ground-breaking ceremony for Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman's (Utar) main campus by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Dr Ling, who announced last week that he had sent an undated resignation letter as the Transport Minister to Dr Mahathir in August last year, was asked if he planned to relinquish the party post too.

He said he simply could not step down from the party post as there are a lot of important things to be done first.

"I cannot say I want to go tomorrow when you don't complete a lot of things. So, that's my meaning. I am not saying when (to step down)," he said.

Dr Ling, however, declined to answer when asked when he intends to retract his resignation letter to Dr Mahathir following the Prime Minister's statement today that he had not decided on the matter.

Dr Mahathir told reporters in Putrajaya today that he would make the decision when it suits his time and the government's interest because he had to think very carefully when replacing a minister in a very important position.

Instead, Dr Ling said, he had given the letter to Dr Mahathir and the Prime Minister knows when the suitable or appropriate time to decide on the matter.

He said the question of who or how long they served in the Cabinet depends on the Prime Minister's prerogative.

"But, when the time comes, I will only go with thankfulness and gratitude in my heart because I was given this opportunity to serve the nation and do nation service at such a high level," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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