

11 APR 2004

MCA-Posts

FU AH KIW AND CHUA SOI LEK, NEW VICE-PRESIDENTS?

KUALA LUMPUR, April 11 (Bernama) -- The MCA Central Committee (CC) meeting on Tuesday, the first after the 11th General Election last March 21, are likely to appoint two new vice-presidents, a party source said today.

The party's decision-making body is empowered to make the appointments to fill the two vacancies following the appointments of Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Datuk Chan Kong Choy as president and deputy president respectively on May 23 last year.

"The CC is expected to discuss the matter and the forerunners for the two post are Datuk Dr Chua Soi Lek and Datuk Fu Ah Kiow," the source told Bernama.

Dr Chua, who is Johor MCA Chief, is the newly appointed Health Minister, while Fu is the Higher Education Deputy Minister.

The source said the changes were in line with the initiative of the party leadership to strengthen the party after the recent general election, which saw some MCA leaders not appointed to their respective cabinet or state executive council posts.

"The appointment of the two comes at the right time as they are likely to unite the party which has a history of splitting into two rival camps.

"Now, there is no more Team A or Team B as the top two party leaders have strongly united the party with strong backing from their supporters," the source said.

In the 1999 party elections, Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, Datuk Chua Jui Meng, Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn and Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy were elected as the four vice-presidents.

However, following the implementation of the peace plan brokered by former prime minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, and with the stepping down of Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek as

president and deputy president of the party respectively, two of the vice-presidents were eventually appointed by the CC as their successors to lead the party of some 1.3 million members.

The elevation of Ong and Chan have left the two vice-president's posts vacant until now.

The source said: "The appointment comes as part of the changes to the party line-up. Tuesday's meeting of the CC would also see the appointment of a new treasurer-general as well as the possibility of an assistant organising secretary," he said.

The current MCA Secretary-General Tan Sri Dr Ting Chew Peh is likely to continue serving the post while Terengganu MCA Chief Senator Datuk Lau Yin Pin is likely to be appointed as the new treasurer-general.

"The assistant organising secretary's post, if approved, is likely to go to Datuk Hon Choon Kim (Deputy Education Minister) or Datuk Donald Lim Siang Chai (Deputy Information Minister)," he said.

However, the source said the appointment would only take effect if the majority of the CC members agreed to the changes made to the party's line-up.

-- BERNAMA
AT HK ABG