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Allocation for new villages increased to RM55m

HOUSING and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting has denied an allegation by a leader of the Opposition that new villages have yet to receive any allocation for infrastructure development.

Sin Chew Daily quoted him as saying yesterday the ministry has consistently provided funds for 452 new villages nationwide since 2000.

In fact, the allocation for next year has been increased to RM55 million.

In a report in the newspaper on Saturday, DAP Youth chief Nga Kor Ming claimed that the Government had ignored the developmental needs of new villages.

Another newspaper, Nanyang Siang Pau, criticised Western newsmen for attempting to manipulate the OIC news conferences by posing ambiguous and irrelevant questions to the delegates.

A commentary in the daily yesterday described the move as a deliberate act to "disturb" the main agenda of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference Summit.

It also said despite growing awareness of the need to enhance cooperation, OIC members should make it a priority to improve their economies and scientific know-how so that they will not be dominated by the major powers.

Elsewhere, MCA had been urged to hold a farewell party for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

In an exclusive interview published in China Press yesterday, former MCA president Datuk Seri Ling Liong Sik said the MCA can show its appreciation to Dr Mahathir in a way similar to the farewell dinner organised by the party years ago for Tun Hussein Onn.

Dr Ling was then the host of the farewell dinner.

Dr Ling, who is now chairman of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman, said he had no plan to contest the upcoming general election.

Nonetheless, he is prepared to play a role in the campaign if his help is needed.