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Amendments to top MCA agenda

Chow Kum Hor

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - The Aug 10 MCA general assembly, which will be the last one to be opened by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, will also be the first for the party's new president and deputy since assuming their posts.

Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Datuk Chan Kong Choy who were simultaneously elected president and deputy president respectively on May 23, and other MCA central committee members, will join about 2,800 delegates nationwide at the party's 50th annual general assembly.

MCA secretary-general Tan Sri Dr Ting Chew Peh, in saying this today, added by convention, the MCA general assembly was opened by the Prime Minister, who is also Barisan Nasional chairman. Dr Mahathir steps down in October.

Topping the agenda for this assembly will be amendments to the MCA constitution to limit the terms of president, and Youth and Wanita heads to three terms or nine years, starting from 2005.

Dr Ting said at a Press conference that the MCA headquarters had given the states, divisions and branches until end of July to submit proposed resolutions which would be tabled at the AGM.

Asked whether a resolution to endorse the party's new leadership would be tabled, he said there was no necessity to do so.

In accordance with the MCA constitution, Ong and Chan who were vice-presidents, were elected to their current party posts by the central committee. This followed the simultaneous resignation of Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik and Datuk Seri Lim Ah Lek as president and deputy president respectively.

Usually, delegates to the general assembly will elect the president, deputy, four vice-presidents and 25 central committee members during the triennial party elections.

On whether the general assembly will elect two people to fill up the vice-presidencies vacated by Ong and Chan, Dr Ting said the central committee had already decided that the posts would be left vacant for the time being. The MCA Youth and Wanita assemblies will be held separately on Aug 9, with the Youth meeting to be opened by Chan while Dr Ting himself will open the Wanita assembly.

Dr Ting also announced that the headquarters would hold a "salutation ceremony" and farewell dinner for Dr Ling for his vast contributions to the party and Government.

The ceremony will be held on July 26 at 2pm when a series of events, including speeches and slides of Dr Ling's achievements would be screened.