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Ling will not defend Labis seat in next polls

Patrick Sennyah

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, who stepped down as MCA president yesterday, said he would not defend his Labis parliamentary seat in the next general election.

He said he was not sure what his plans for the future were, but for now he would be spending more time with his constituents in Labis.

"I have not given much thought to my future plans. As for my post as Transport Minister, I leave it in the good hands of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to decide," he said at a Press conference at Wisma MCA today.

Present were newly-elected president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and other MCA leaders.

On the transition of power in the party, Dr Ling said he held discussions with Ong and new deputy president Datuk Chan Kong Choy in private.

"These meetings were held in full confidentiality and during these sessions, both Ong and Chan gave me their fullest co-operation," he said.

He said he was stepping down as president with a great sense of gratitude and happiness, knowing that the party was left in the hands of two young and able leaders.

"In the MCA, we have always promoted young, bright people with the potential of one day taking over the leadership of the party.

"We have improved the party from what it was in the 1980s to the healthy, stable organisation that it is today."

He said the party had since scored many achievements, especially the setting up of Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman.

"I am also proud to say today that the MCA is a totally debt-free party."

He said though there might still be some differences among the members, he was confident the new leaders could soon build bridges.

"We all share the aspirations of the Prime Minister for a united Barisan Nasional and I am confident Ong and Chan will work towards this," added Dr Ling.