

**Star shares transfer sparks speculation**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**November 04, 2010**

MCA's investment arm Huaren Holdings has disposed of its controlling stake in media conglomerate Star Publications (M) Bhd today to the party.

In a bizarre cross-trade that is bound to raise question marks, the MCA insisted that its still in control of the public-listed company, which runs Star, the best-selling English daily in the country.

Star Publications boasts a market capital of RM3.05 billion.

tan chai ho pc 200809 01Bloomberg had reported that the 42.4 percent stake that changed hands in a cross-trade today was a transfer of the shares from Huaren Holdings Sdn Bhd, the party's investment arm, to the party, quoting MCA treasurer-general Tan Chai Ho (left).

But when contacted by Malaysiakini, the veteran politician remained mum.

"I know what you're going to ask me. Just wait for the announcement on Monday. I am not supposed to answer any more questions," he said before ending the telephone conversation.

It is also understood that party president Dr Chua Soi Lek's office is busy preparing a press statement, possibly to be released later.

Huaren had previously sold off its entire 3.6 percent shareholding in Media Chinese International Limited which owns, among others, local Chinese newspapers Nanyang Siang Pau, Sin Chew Daily, China Press and Guang Ming Daily.

Nov 5 update:

In a short press statement issued on Nov 5, MCA confirmed that it was transferring 313,315,760 Star shares of RM1 each from Huaren Holdings to the party worth about RM1.3 billion at prevailing market price.

It stressed that MCA's interest in the Star will remain unchanged both before and after the transfer.

"The transfer is effected for the purpose of reorganising MCA's investment whereby Huaren Holdings will divest its passive investment in Star and increase focus on its investment in unquoted shares and other assets, in order to achieve greater management efficiency and provide maximum return to shareholders.

"MCA investments in Star will continue to be passive and long-term in nature."

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Source : <http://www.malaysiakini.com/news/147356>