



**PM tightens noose around Ong's neck**  
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Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak appeared to be tightening the noose around the neck of embattled MCA president Ong Tee Keat.

Speaking at a press conference today, the Barisan Nasional chairperson urged MCA to make a swift decision in the wake of yesterday's extraordinary general meeting.

He said it is important for the second largest party in the ruling coalition to resolve the leadership crisis before the position of its president in the cabinet can be decided.



Najib said what was important now was for the MCA to arrive at a comprehensive solution so that the problem would not recur.

"I'm counting on the MCA leadership to make an immediate decision, to rehabilitate MCA and regain the confidence of its members and that of the general public in the party," he told reporters after launching the bilingual book '*Helming the Times*', written by him.

"I believe they (MCA leaders) have taken into consideration the decision made at the extraordinary general meeting (EGM) yesterday," he was quoted as saying by *Bernama*.

**CC must heed EGM decision**

Najib said BN respected the decision made by the MCA delegates and believed that if the interests of BN and MCA were given priority, the party could become strong and stable again and be an important component in BN.

"Thus, whatever decision that the MCA central working committee will make later must be based on the decision arrived at the MCA EGM yesterday," he said.

The MCA central working committee will meet on Thursday to decide on subsequent action following the vote of no-confidence passed on Ong's leadership as well as the decision not to accept Dr Chua Soi Lek as the MCA deputy president.

Asked on the implication to BN if Ong were to decide not to relinquish the MCA leadership, Najib said: "Why do you want to assume that he will not step down? Let's settle one thing at a time."

Najib said the MCA leadership must have the characteristics that the people could trust and capable of drawing the support of the Chinese community for the BN.

**CC tells Ong not to resign yet**

Meanwhile, MCA secretary-general Wong Foon Meng urged Ong not to make any hasty decision until the central committee (CC) meets on Oct 15.



to stay on until the party's body sits on Thursday.

"The MCA central committee as well as the MCA presidential council holds that the decisions (at the EGM) were made collectively as a team and we should be accountable as a team.

"The majority of the CC members had earlier advised the president not to make any decisions irrespective of the outcome of the EGM until the president refers to the CC, to which he agreed," said Wong.

He stressed that Ong as well as the CC members "respect the decisions and the results of the EGM" and will decide on Ong's future after the matter is deliberated at the CC meeting.

"The advice to Ong was made for the sake of the unity. The president is not alone in this matter," said Wong.

### **CC has powers to accept or reject**

Asked about the party's constitution which states that a two-third majority is needed to remove the president, Wong said: "Of course there is a provision under the party constitution for the expulsion of central committee members (including the president).

"But in this case, since the decision was made at the EGM with regards to the vote of no-confidence against the president... it will be deliberated at the CC meeting," he said.

According to him, the CC has the powers to either accept or reject Ong's resignation. Ong currently on four days leave - until Wednesday, after failing to secure the confidence of the central delegates. He lost the vote of no-confidence by a narrow 14-vote margin, when he polled 1,155 to 1,141 votes.

His arch rival, Chua was reinstated as a member but failed to secure his deputy president's post.

Ong had earlier vowed to quit his post as president if he lost the no-confidence vote even by a simple majority.

Meanwhile, Wong was reluctant to concede that the latest course of events has once again plunged the party into crisis.

Wong (*photo, right*) said Ong remains the president until he tenders his resignation. He added that Ong has been asked decision-making

as well as the