

Ong: Renew to be relevant

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Groom younger generation to ensure party's progress, MCA leaders told

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KUALA LUMPUR: MCA leaders and members have been urged to adopt the "automatic renewal system" to ensure that the party would be more effective, innovative and attractive.

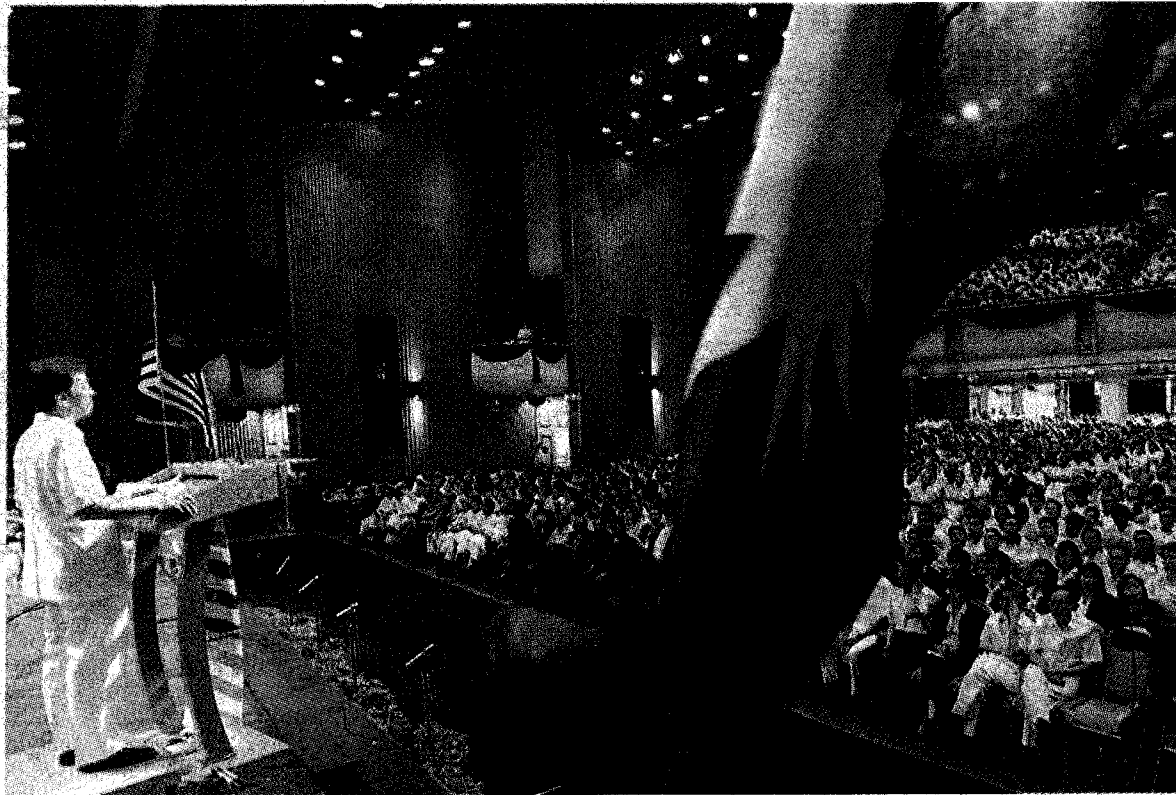
Its president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said that under the system, office bearers at all levels would be encouraged to groom and train the new generation of members to be party leaders so that MCA would continue to move towards a new era.

"The people's expectation of the party is higher nowadays and it is facing more complicated challenges. In order for the party to stay close to the community, we should continue the renewal progress so that MCA will always be relevant to the community," he said in his speech at the party's 58th anniversary at Wisma MCA here yesterday.

The theme of this year's celebrations is *Maju Seiring Era Baru* (Together Forward Towards A New Era).

Ong said the party was not getting rid of its old guards but noted that it was its responsibility to nurture and groom the younger generation.

"If party leaders have occupied the party or government positions for a long time without realising that they have lost the enthusiasm to



The president's address: Ong delivering his speech at the party's 58th anniversary celebration at Wisma MCA in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. — RAJA SHAMSUL BAHREN / The Star

serve the people, it would only bring harm to the party.

"These leaders would only choose to hear praises from their supporters and not criticisms made from those outside the party. They would think

those who have criticised them are their enemies," he said, adding that this would cause factions to form within the party.

Ong, who is Housing and Local Government Minister, urged party

leaders to work towards a healthy political culture.

Ong said the party, which has 1.09 million members, also focused on the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises, and

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DATUK SERI ONG KA TING

would ensure that financial institutions and government agencies continue to provide loans to entrepreneurs regardless of race.

He said the Malaysian Chinese Economic Consultative Council — comprising the party and Chinese guilds and associations — would continue to work together and give feedback to the Government.

"MCA has also suggested during internal government meetings to recruit more talented non-Malays so that they will have an opportunity to contribute to the country," he said.

On education, he said the Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman main campus in Kampar would start recruiting students in May.

Ong also said the nation-building contributions of Tun Tan Cheng Lock, MCA founder and one of Malaya's founding fathers, would always be remembered.