

# Mahathir's first job—to review Ministry set-up

22

**KUALA LUMPUR, Fri.**—The new Education Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed, said today he will review the set-up of his Ministry and the capacity and ability of its officers.

He told reporters he had certain ideas he wished to try out, but "I need information on these things before I can know whether these ideas are suitable".

Dr. Mahathir got down immediately to business today with discussions with his top Ministry officials.

He also officially took over duties from the former Minister, Haji Mohamed Yaacob. But he will only really begin his work on Monday after "clearing up things" in his clinic in Alor Star.

Dr. Mahathir said the Education Ministry was a heavy responsibility because it involved many groups — parents, students and teachers.

"I will sound out their opinions, so that whatever decision is taken later on will not disappoint any one group."

He said his job would be a bit difficult at first because he was never "apprenticed" as Deputy Minister or Parliamentary Secretary.

But his job would be less burdensome since he has a deputy to help him — Mr. Chan Siang Sun.

Also, educational matters are not something new to Dr. Mahathir. He was chairman of the Higher Education Council and the Higher Education Advisory Council, and at present, he is chairman of the University Council of University Kebangsaan. He will remain in this last post.

He will also in the meantime continue as Pima chairman.

"A person enters politics not only to talk but also to make and implement policies," he said.

## Time for school shake-up, DAP tells Mahathir

**S.T. - 7 SEP 1974**  
★ From Page One

The DAP issued a statement today calling Dr. Mahathir's attention to "falling standards in primary and secondary schools."

The party's secretary-general, Mr. Lim Kit Siang, said that Dr. Mahathir should look into the "serious deterioration" of the quality of education over the last few years.

Dr. Mahathir should also review and abolish the automatic promotion system to end the futility of putting children in higher classes when they could not even cope with studies at a lower level, he said.

He also called for a special programme to produce enough trained teachers and asked that temporary teachers be now employed on a permanent basis.

Mr. Lim described Tun Razak's "action-orientated" 21-member Cabinet as containing "shocks and disappointments."

Dr. Mahathir's appointment and the appointment of Tun Datu Mustapha as Defence Minister would give rise to controversy, he said.

Mr. Lim expressed disappointment that a Ministry for Consumer Affairs had not been set up and hoped that new Trade and Industry Minister Dato Hamzah Abu Samah would set up a special department to protect consumers by keeping prices down.

"The Government must be tough-minded and firm in its action to curb further inflationary spirals through

unjustifiable price increases," he said.

He welcomed the creation of the Ministry of Co-ordination of Public Corporations — an additional portfolio for Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Hussein Onn.

"In the past few years so many public corporations, such as Pemas, UDA, Bank Bumiputra and now Petronas, have been created dealing with gigantic amounts of public funds, that they seem to be creations spending public money but not subject to public control through parliamentary scrutiny," he said.

Pekemas leader Dr. Tan Chee Khoo said the new Cabinet, although smaller than the previous one which had 23 Ministers, was still "too large" for a small country like Malaysia.

"One is led to the conclusion that this Cabinet, instead of being one of action, is too unwieldy and cumbersome to be effective," he said.

Not too many of the new faces in the Cabinet would inspire confidence, he added.

The new Cabinet does not reflect the racial composition of the country as claimed, he said, because there are only five non-Malays among the 21 Ministers — and none hold any post of importance.