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Megat Junid appointed a minister

DATUK Megat Junid Megat Ayob, who has served as Deputy Home Minister for 11 years, has been appointed the new Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister. The appointment takes effect this Saturday.

Datuk Mohamed Tajol Rosli Ghazali will replace Megat Junid as Deputy Home Minister while Prime Minister's Department Parliamentary Secretary Datuk Azmi Khalid will succeed Tajol as Deputy Minister of Housing and Local Government.

Announcing the three appointments at a press conference in Kuala Lumpur yesterday, Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim said the parliamentary secretary's post in the Prime Minister's Department will not be filled immediately.

The Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs portfolio has been vacant after Datuk Abu Hassan Omar resigned on May 2 to pave the way for his appointment as the new Menteri Besar of Selangor.

Anwar, who is also Finance Minister, said the appointments will take effect after the swearing-in ceremony at Istana Negara on Saturday.

Anwar described the appointments as "a very minor reshuffle". Asked if a major reshuffle would follow, he said appointments and changes in Cabinet posts are made from time to time based on prevailing needs.

"Therefore, this matter need not trouble some parties," he added.

Bernama reports: Megat Junid said he will not face problems adapting himself to his new portfolio. He thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who is on two months' vacation from May 19, and Anwar for their confidence in him, saying he was touched by the promotion.

He said he was informed of his appointment by Anwar on Monday.

Speaking to reporters at his ministry, Megat Junid reacted with mixed feelings, saying: "I feel happy and sad as I have to leave the Home Ministry after serving for 11 years."

Asked how he feels about his new appointment, he said: "I'm a bit confused after being a security man for the past 11 years and now I have to switch to economic matters such as ways to curb inflation which require a new approach."

He said since the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry is new to him, it is premature for him to outline his plans before being briefed by the ministry's officials.

In Kuala Selangor, Abu Hassan said he believes that the appointment of Megat Junid to succeed him will enhance the effectiveness of the ministry.

He said Megat Junid is not only experienced but has proven his ability to carry out important tasks as Deputy Home Minister.

"I am fully confident Megat Junid can carry out his duties well, including the enforcement aspect, as he is familiar with enforcement work of the police," he told a news conference.

With his personality, Megat Junid will be able to obtain cooperation from officers of the ministry and consumer bodies to enable him carry out his new duties, Abu Hassan said.

He added that he will brief Megat Junid and hand over his duties after the Kuala Selangor by-election today.

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