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Anwar-Cabinet

MEGAT JUNID MADE A FULL MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, May 28 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob was promoted as a full minister today, after over 10 years as Deputy Home Minister, most of which was spent tackling the drug and illegal immigrant problems which threaten national security.

He was appointed Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister in place of Datuk Abu Hassan Omar in a minor Cabinet reshuffle announced by Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

Anwar told a news conference at his office here that the post of Deputy Home Minister would be taken over by Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Tajol Rosli Ghazali.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Azmi Khalid was promoted deputy minister to take over from Tajol Rosli.

On the possibility of a bigger Cabinet reshuffle in future, Anwar said that was the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

"It may be held from time to time depending on the need and the vacancies," said Anwar who described today's appointment as "filling a vacancy" agreed upon by the Prime Minister.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is on two months' vacation overseas.

The appointment is effective Saturday when the swearing-in will be held.

The post of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister was vacated by Abu Hassan on May 2 after he was named as Selangor Menteri Besar-designate.

Abu Hassan, however, has to win the Permatang state by-election tomorrow to qualify for appointment as Selangor Menteri Besar.

Megat Junid, 54, was appointed Deputy Primary Industries Minister in July 1984 before moving to the Home Ministry in August 1986.

He was one of the longest-serving deputy ministers.

Megat Junid was often in the media limelight because of his firmness in tackling the problems of drugs and illegal immigrants which were described by the authorities as the main threats to national security in view of the thousands of drug addicts, especially among the youth, and the more than one million illegal immigrants, mostly from Indonesia, in the country.

Megat Junid had served as special officer to Dr Mahathir when the latter was the education minister and as his political secretary when he was prime minister.

A Universiti Malaya graduate, Megat Junid was born in Teluk Intan, Perak, on Dec 8, 1942, to a rubber tapper.

He began his career as a teacher and his interest in politics started while in campus when he was actively involved in the Malay students association. He joined Umno in 1972.

He was elected Hilir Perak Member of Parliament in the 1982 general election but represented Pasir Salak in the 1990 and 1995 general elections.

He is the Perak Umno liaison deputy chairman, Umno Youth deputy permanent chairman and an Umno supreme council members.

Tajol Rosli, who replaces Megat Junid in the "hot" seat, is also from Perak. He was appointed Rural Development Ministry parliamentary secretary in 1983.

Three years later he was promoted as deputy minister in the same ministry. He was Deputy Energy, Telecommunications and Posts Minister in

1990, and Deputy Housing and Local Government Minister since 1995.

Tajol Rosli, 52, who was the Majlis Amanah Rakyat (Mara) chairman for two years from 1984, holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from Melbourne University, Australia.

He is also active in social work and had held several important posts like chairman of the 4B Youth Movement, Malaysian Youth Council president and Asian Youth Council president.

Azmi, 56, from Perlis, was appointed parliamentary secretary to the Prime Minister's department in May 1995 after winning the Padang Besar parliamentary seat in the 1995 general election.

He was tipped to be the Perlis Menteri Besar in the 1982 general election but it did not materialise as his candidacy for the Bintong state seat was rejected on technical grounds.

A Universiti Malaya graduate, he had been managing director of Cima Bhd, a cement factory in Chuping, Perlis, and senior general manager of Talasco Insurance Sdn Bhd. -- BERNAMA

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