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Megat-Minister

MEGAT JUNID REACTS WITH MIXED FEELINGS

KUALA LUMPUR, May 28 (Bernama) -- Deputy Home Minister Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob, who has been promoted to full minister, says he will not face problems adapting himself to his new portfolio as Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister.

Saying that he was touched by the promotion, he thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for their confidence in him.

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

He was appointed Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister succeeding Datuk Abu Hassan Omar in a minor reshuffle announced by Anwar today. His appointment takes effect on Saturday.

Abu Hassan vacated his minister's post on May 2 after he was named the Selangor Menteri Besar-designate.

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 felt 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 requires a new approach."

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

He, however, pledged to discharge his duties to the best of his ability.

Megat Junid also said he would give up several posts except president of the National Association Against Drug Abuse (Pemadam) as Anwar had asked him to continue in that post as he was appointed by the prime minister.

Among the posts he would relinquish are deputy chairman of the National Narcotics Council chaired by Dr Mahathir, member of the Cabinet Committee on Social Ills and Foreign Workers.

Reflecting on his 11-year stint at the Home Ministry, Megat Junid said among his major contributions are waging an all out war on the drug scourge and upgrading the Treatment and Rehabilitation Division in the ministry to the National Narcotics Council headed by a senior police officer with the rank of Assistant Commissioner (ACP) as its director-general.

He was also instrumental in setting up the Association of Reformed Addicts (Pengasih) which played a role to persuade addicts to kick the habit and complement Pemadam's rehabilitation programmes.

"Before Pemadam and the ministry moved in different directions but recently their activities and programmes were streamlined to function as a team," said Megat Junid, who is MP for Pasir Salak.

His other meaningful contribution was adopting tough measures to tackle the influx of illegal immigrants to Malaysia to the extent of causing social problems.

He also introduced the regularisation programme for illegals in Sabah to legalise them by giving them an opportunity to obtain valid travel documents.

Under the programme, the government hoped to resolve the illegal immigrants' problem in Sabah in five years.

Megat Junid said he hoped that his successor Housing and Local

Government Deputy Minister Datuk Tajol Rosli Ghazali, who is also his schoolmate at Anderson Secondary School in Ipoh, would pursue his efforts to wipe out the drug menace.

Megat Junid was confident that Tajol Rosli, who would assume the National Narcotics Council deputy chairman's post by virtue of his new appointment, would perform his duties effectively.

Meanwhile, Tajol Rosli said he was overwhelmed by the appointment and thanked Dr Mahathir for the trust and confidence in him.

He said he would consult his predecessor Megat Junid on the workings of the ministry.

Met by reporters at his ministry, the unassuming Tajol Rosli said he came to know about his transfer to the Home Ministry while campaigning for Abu Hassan in Kuala Selangor.

He said he would call on Acting Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim for his advice before getting on with his new job.

He also thanked Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh for giving him full freedom while serving as his deputy.

Meanwhile, parliamentary-secretary to the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Azmi Khalid, who has been elevated to deputy minister to take over from Tajol Rosli, said his promotion was a recognition to Perlis.

He thanked Dr Mahathir and Anwar for their wisdom in upgrading him to a deputy minister.

"This is an honour to Perlis because the last time an elected representative from the state was made a deputy minister was Datuk Radzi Sheikh Ahmad about 10 years ago," said the Padang Besar MP. Radzi was then Deputy Home Minister.

Azmi pledged to execute his duties entrusted upon him with full commitment and dedication as well as give serious attention to the people's needs.

In KUALA SELANGOR, Umno Youth leader Datuk Ahmad Zahid Hamidi welcomed the appointments of Megat Junid, Tajol Rosli and Azmi Khalid.

He said Megat Junid's elevation to a full minister was appropriate as he was the most senior deputy minister.

He said Tajol Rosli was being given a new exposure in his appointment as he would be directly under Dr Mahathir, who is also Home Minister.

He said Azmi's appointment was also appropriate to represent Perlis which did not have a deputy minister from a long time.

"Umno Youth had sent telegrams to all of them as soon as Anwar made the announcement," he added. -- BERNAMA

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