

23 DEC 1997

Prisons

OMAR IS NEW PRISONS CHIEF

KAJANG, Dec 23 (Bernama) -- Deputy director-general Haji Omar Mohamed Dan takes over as Prisons Department director-general from Jan 1 succeeding Datuk Mohd Zaman Khan who retires at the end of the year.

With Omar's promotion, the department's top post, held by senior police officers for the past eight years, goes back to a prisons officer.

Deputy Home Minister Datuk Ong Ka Ting announced Omar's appointment after launching the department's motto and set of work ethics at the Prisons College here today.

Ong also named prisons chief of security Mustafa Osman as the incoming deputy director-general.

On March 1 1990, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, as Home Minister, appointed Datuk Yassin Jaafar of the police as prisons director-general following a series of jail-breaks, alleged drug-supply rings among warders and cases of inmates getting special treatment.

Yassin took over from Datuk Ibrahim Mohamad and was in turn succeeded by Mohd Zaman, also of the police, on Feb 9 1994.

In his speech, Ong recorded his appreciation of the police's cooperation for seconding two senior officers to help in prisons management and operations.

Ong said the police gesture enhanced the prison institution especially in terms of security for jails.

"I regard this as a success and it is time that the post of director-general be returned to able staff as the department now has qualified officers who can handle problems that may arise while the police stand by to help if the need warrants it," said Ong.

Omar, 54, began service with the department on Jan 1 1970 and has been deputy director-general since Oct 4 1995.

Born in Tanjung Piandang, Perak, Omar holds a Sijil Tinggi Persekolahan Malaysia.

He had attended a six-month Chinese language course in Kuala Lumpur in 1974 and a "Community-Based Correction" course in Japan in 1979.

Omar had served in various senior supervisory posts at the Taiping, Johor Baharu, Pulau Jerjak and Sungai Petani jails as well as superintendent of the Pulau Pinang and Kuala Lumpur prisons in the late 80s and early 90s. -- BERNAMA

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