

Appointees Mustapa²⁶ and Ali get thumbs up

KUALA LUMPUR: The appointments of Datuk Mustapa Mohamed as Second Finance Minister and Tan Sri Ali Abul Hasan Sulaiman as Bank Negara Governor have been lauded.

The Malay Chamber of Commerce of Malaysia said the two were the right men for the job.

Its president, Syed Amin Al-Jeffri, said the Government had picked suitable candidates who had wide experiences in the country's financial management system.

Their expertise would come in handy in pulling the country quickly out of the economic doldrums, he said in a statement.

He also hailed the decision by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to retain Mustapa as the Entrepreneur Development Minister.

By holding the two portfolios, Mustapa would be in a better position to help small- and medium-scale entrepreneurs who had been badly hit by the economic slowdown, he said.

Being the Second Finance Minister, Mustapa had the authority to ensure speedier disburse-

ment of funds to bumiputra businessmen to restart their businesses.

In **Kota Baru**, Menteri Besar Datuk Nik Abdul Aziz Nik Mat said Mustapa's appointment was "appropriate."

"We are happy with his appointment and also proud of him as he is one of us, a Kelantanese," he said yesterday.

Nik Aziz said he hoped Mustapa would be able to use his clout to foster

closer ties between the state and the Government.

"We hope there will not be any more difficulties when it comes to financial allocation in future."

Kelantan Umno veteran Tan Sri Hussein Ahmad said Mustapa's appointment was a recognition of his ability.

In **Penang**, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon described the new appointments as "most appropriate."

He said the appointments would bolster the Government's financial administrative machinery as both men were well-trained economists with sound knowledge and extensive administrative experience.

Dr Koh expressed confidence that the duo would work well with Dr Mahathir in the quest for economic recovery.

He noted that while Ali was from Penang, Mustapa also had a good knowledge about the state as he had worked closely with the state in his capacity as Entrepreneur Development Minister and now Second Finance Minister.