

19 JUN 1998

Ghafar-Veterans

FIVE UMNO VETERANS PROPOSED TO CONSULTATIVE PANEL

KUALA LUMPUR, June 19 (Bernama) -- Names of five Umno stalwarts have been proposed to sit in the Umno Veterans' Consultative Committee which will advise the party leadership on various issues including the economy.

Former Deputy Prime Minister Tun Ghafar Baba said he had named Tan Sri Ghazali Shafie, Tan Sri Aishah Ghani, Tan Sri Abdul Samad Idris and Ibrahim Azmi to be members of the panel headed by him.

Umno Information chief Datuk Dr Yusof Nor would also sit in the committee as a representative from party headquarters, he said.

Their names have been given to Umno secretary-general Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik who would in turn forward them to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, he told reporters after the opening of the Umno General Assembly by Dr Mahathir.

Ghafar, who is also former Umno deputy president, said he himself selected the members without involving Dr Mahathir.

He denied claims by certain groups that the Umno veterans had been asked by Dr Mahathir to help him tackle the economic woes so that he could continue to cling to power.

In fact, the June 13 meeting of Umno veterans with Dr Mahathir was on his (Ghafar) own initiative and not on Dr Mahathir's request, he said.

" The initiative came from me. I'm prepared to help the government to deal with the economic slowdown but I cannot do it alone.

" Umno old guards who have the experience and time to spare can come forward to help out," he said.

Ghafar said he invited Dr Mahathir to explain the government policies which would serve as a guide to some 300 veterans who attended the briefing.

-- BERNAMA

NHD TS