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Mahathir chairs first meeting of NEAC

Kamarul Yunus

PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad chaired the first meeting of the 24-member National Economic Action Council (NEAC) yesterday, indicating that the Government is serious in addressing the present economic problems.

Besides the Government representatives, the council comprises corporate leaders, workers' union members and civil servants.

Speaking to reporters after the meeting, Dr Mahathir however said he has yet to appoint two of the remaining five executive council (Exco) members in the NEAC.

Other NEAC Exco members are Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, and Economic Adviser to the Government Tun Daim Zainuddin, who is also the council's executive director.

To implement and assist the exco, a working committee will be established. It will be chaired by the NEAC executive director, with the Economic Planning Unit in the Prime Minister's Department as its secretariat.

Dr Mahathir also said the NEAC has yet to decide when the next meeting will be or how often it will meet.

"Not yet ... probably after the holidays (Chinese New Year and Hari Raya Puasa," he said.

Dr Mahathir also said except for Daim, the others will not have any specific roles.

Besides the Prime Minister, Anwar and Daim, 21 others who were appointed to the NEAC, include ministers.

They are Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik (Transport), Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu (Works), Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik (Primary Industry), Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz (International Trade and Industry), Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak (Education), Datuk Dr Sulaiman Daud (Agriculture), Datuk Mustapa Mohamed (Entrepreneur Development), Datuk Osu Sukam (Land and Cooperative Development) and Datuk Seri Megat Junid Megat Ayob (Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs).

Others include Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali, National Chambers of Commerce and Industry Malaysia president Tan Sri Tajudin Ramli, Federation of Malaysian Manufacturers president Paul Low, Datuk Soong Siew Hong, who represents the Association of Small and Medium-Scale Industries, Association of Banks chairman Amirsham Abdul Aziz, Association of Brokerage Firms chairman Datuk Tony Tiah and Association of Finance Companies chairman Datuk Tay Ah Lek.

Malaysian Trades Union Congress president Zainal Rampak, Federation of Consumers Association Malaysia president Professor Hamdan Adnan, Congress of Union of Employees in the Public Administration and Civil Service president Abdul Aziz Mohd Sultan, Institute of Strategic and International Studies chairman and chief executive Tan Sri Noordin Sopiee and the Economic Planning Unit director-general Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman.

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