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Mustapa: I will discharge my responsibilities to help PM

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed today thanked Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for the confidence and trust in appointing him as Second Finance Minister.

Mustapa said the appointment came as a "surprise" to him but was quick to add that he would discharge his responsibilities to help Dr Mahathir, who holds the post of First Finance Minister.

"I will extend all the help to Dr Mahathir in carrying out the job in the Finance Ministry," he said at his office in Jalan Raja Laut.

For a start, Mustapa said he had asked the Finance Ministry secretary-general to give him a briefing at 5.30pm.

Mustapa, who retains his portfolio as Entrepreneur Development Minister, said he would divide his time between the two ministeries.

"It means more work for me as there are more things to be done."

Mustapa, who is also a member of the National Economic Action Council, said there were many economic decisions and policies which needed to be implemented immediately to spur economic recovery.

"I have to spend more time at the Finance Ministry in view of the forthcoming Budget," he added.

Mustapa said a lot of changes had already taken place since he left the Treasury as a Deputy Finance Minister and was appointed a full Minister after the 1995 general election.

"There are a lot of new things I have to learn because the economic and financial 'landscape' has changed in the last few years," he added.

Mustapa said currency markets have been attacked by speculators and had caused havoc to the economies of many countries and globalisation had exposed the country to foreign influences.

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