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Mustapa-Reaction

MUSTAPA SURPRISED BY APPOINTMENT AS SECOND FINANCE MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, Sept 7 (Bernama) -- Datuk Mustapa Mohamed, who was named as the second Finance Minister today, pledged to discharge his duties to the best of his abilities and help Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in the ministry's work.

Mustapa, who is also Entrepreneur Development Minister, described the appointment as an honour for him and thanked Dr Mahathir for it.

"I was surprised by the appointment," he said in a brief statement.

The Prime Minister's Department, in a statement earlier, announced that Dr Mahathir will be first Finance Minister and Mustapa second Finance Minister with effect from today.

Mustapa said he had been briefed by the ministry's secretary-general on the role and jurisdiction of the ministry.

"I will at the same time continue to carry on with my duties as Entrepreneur Development Minister," he added.

In KUALA TERENGGANU, Education Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Mustapa was well suited for the post as he had vast experience in the field of economics.

He was the appropriate person to help Dr Mahathir in efforts to revive the country's economy, said Najib.

"He has a lot of experience in the field of economics, and more importantly served as Deputy Finance Minister prior to his appointment as Entrepreneur Development Minister," Najib told reporters.

Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim also felt Mustapa was the right person for the post.

"He has experience in the ministry and can carry on his duties properly," said Shahidan who is here to attend a meeting of state executive councillors for education.

Meanwhile, Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik also welcomed Mustapa's appointment, saying he was very knowledgeable in economics.

Asked why there was a need for two finance minister, Sabbaruddin said: "Why not, other countries have that.

"Besides, in our system the deputy minister cannot act as minister because ministers have to be sworn in."

--BERNAMA

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