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Daim-Reactions

LEADERS WELCOME DAIM'S APPOINTMENT AS MINISTER

KUALA LUMPUR, June 25 (Bernama) -- Government and corporate leaders today welcomed the appointment of Tun Daim Zainuddin as Minister of Special Functions, saying Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has made the right move by "reassigning" the former finance minister to help in the economic recovery.

International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz said Daim's appointment would enhance the linkage between the Cabinet and the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) of which Daim is the Executive Director.

She said this would translate into the acceleration of the decision-making process of programmes that the government wanted to put in place towards economic recovery.

Describing the appointment as appropriate, Rafidah said "when you have the executive director of the NEAC as a Cabinet member, he not only can tell us what the NEAC has done but also ministers who are not NEAC members can give their input via the executive director on what they feel on certain things."

Speaking to reporters after the official opening of the "SMI Showcase 1998" by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad here, Rafidah said there was no overlapping of duties between her ministry and Daim.

"There is no overlapping as far as I am concerned. Daim will be at his ministry and I'll be at mine," Rafidah said.

Daim, who is the Economic Adviser to the Government, will be sworn in tomorrow.

The Prime Minister's Department announced in a statement yesterday that Daim would be responsible to matters pertaining to economic development.

Rafidah said by virtue of Daim being the executive director, he would surely want feedback from his other Cabinet colleagues who are not members of the council.

Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said Dr Mahathir had always picked the right man for a certain job.

"The country will benefit immensely from Daim's vast experience as a corporate figure and former Finance Minister," he told reporters after meeting C.M. Udasi, the Works Minister from Karnataka, South India, at his office.

Samy Vellu said he was confident that Daim would pull out the country from the economic doldrums.

"Dr Mahathir knows Tun Daim's calibre," he said.

Meanwhile in KOTA BAHARU, Entrepreneur Development Minister Datuk Mustapa Mohamed said Daim's appointment would provide a renewed strength to the country in efforts to deal with the economic problems.

He likened Dr Mahathir, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim and Daim as the combination of three strong pillars who could stimulate the economy.

In KANGAR, Perlis Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim said he was confident that the country's economic problems would be solved soon or by the year-end with Daim at the forefront.

National Malay Chamber of Commerce deputy president Datuk Abdul Rahman Maidin said Daim was the perfect choice for the job.

Hailing Daim's appointment as timely and appropriate, he said the expertise of people with wide economic knowledge should be pooled towards tackling the economic slump which was at a critical stage and required immediate action.

" It is for this reason that the government needed additional assistance from a credible and calibre person like Daim who can devote full attention to the problems at hand without being bogged down by other administrative responsibilities," he said in a statement today.

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