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Fong to continue policies of predecessor

Leong Shen-li; V. Anbalagan

KUALA LUMPUR, Fri. - The new Human Resources Minister Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn said today he will ensure continuity to the policies started and implemented by his predecessor Datuk Lim Ah Lek.

After serving nine years as Deputy Education Minister, Fong, 55, was promoted to a full Minister to replace Lim, who did not contest in the general election.

Describing his appointment as a "pleasant surprise", Fong, who is MCA vice-president, said he would meet Lim soon to seek his advice.

He added that he would try to meet union leaders as soon as possible so that harmonious industrial relations would continue.

Thanking Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik for his appointment, Fong said he would apply his experience to his new position, especially in matters on upgrading of skills and retraining of workers.

He would also promote information technology as part of human resources development.

Prior to joining politics in 1990, Fong was Dean of the Faculty of Economics and Administration at Universiti Malaya.

During the MCA party election in July, Fong garnered the highest number of votes among five contenders for the party national vice-presidency.

Another Deputy Minister promoted to full Minister is Datuk Ong Ka Ting, who replaces Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh as Housing and Local Government Minister.

Ong, 43, who is also MCA vice-president, was Deputy Home Minister from 1990. He served as Health Ministry Parliamentary Secretary for one year before that.

Ong was a teacher for five years before becoming Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik's Press secretary and later political secretary.

Born in Lenggong, Perak, Ong obtained a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Mathematics and Chemistry from Universiti Malaya and Diploma in Education from the same university.

His involvement in politics started when he joined MCA in 1979.

New face Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen, who was appointed Deputy Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister replacing Datuk Teng Gaik Kwan, has been very involved in activities concerning women's health, gender issues, economics and politics.

Dr Ng, 53, is Wanita MCA chief. A doctor by training, she was appointed Senator for one term from 1993 to 1996.

In Gopeng, MCA secretary-general Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh, who was dropped as Housing and Local Minister, said he would play his role as an effective MP and a Government backbencher.

Ting has been Gopeng MP since 1997.

He told this to reporters after attending the Gopeng MCA division election victory dinner.

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