

11 JAN 1999

Abdullah-Friendly

HOME MINISTRY TO HAVE PEOPLE FRIENDLY ADMINISTRATION

KUALA LUMPUR, Jan 11 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today that he will strive to ensure a people friendly administration at the Home Ministry (KDN).

Abdullah, who has also been appointed home minister, said that he would strive to meet the aspiration of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in ensuring a people friendly administration by giving immediate attention to problems raised by the public.

"He (Dr Mahathir) wants departments under the KDN to adopt a more people friendly attitude. To me, there should be no problem in implementing such an approach," he told reporters after calling on Dr Mahathir at the Prime Minister's Department, here.

At the 30-minute meeting, Dr Mahathir briefed him on his duties following his appointment to the two posts.

Abdullah, who was foreign minister prior to his new appointment, said that his duties as deputy prime minister would be further specified by Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Abdul Halim Ali.

At the meeting, Dr Mahathir also informed Abdullah of his membership in the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) which meets every working day except on Wednesdays when the Cabinet holds its weekly meeting.

He was however not informed of his post or position in the NEAC except as a member of the NEAC's executive committee which holds regular meetings chaired by the prime minister.

"I pledge to focus on efforts to implement whatever decisions made by the government or the NEAC...this is vital as decisions made must be implemented fast so that the desired results can be achieved through immediate action," he said.

Abdullah said he could see that Dr Mahathir had placed priority on the government's measures to revive the nation's economy as the NEAC and matters related to it topped their discussion.

He said that he would be operating from the KDN and would move into the office of the deputy prime minister when it has been vacated.

Meanwhile, the Malaysian Muslim Youth Movement (Abim) welcomed Abdullah's statement that he was prepared to listen to all quarters.

"His preparedness to listen to all quarters including non-governmental organisations and opposition parties is most welcomed and hopefully it can be implemented as soon as possible and in an open manner in the interest and unity of the nation," said its president, Ahmad Azam Abdul Rahman, in a statement.

The National Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia (NCCIM), in congratulating Abdullah's appointment as deputy prime minister, said the business community was very delighted with the appointment as his vast experience would assist in bringing political and economic stability to the country.

"We are confident that Datuk Seri Abdullah will be able to assist the prime minister in the country's effort to revive the economy and to free the Malaysian economy from the current slowdown," NCCIM president Tan Sri Tajuddin Ramli said in a statement.

The NCCIM congratulated Dr Mahathir on the appointment of Abdullah.

-- BERNAMA

MNY AHH RM