

10 DEC 1999

Cabinet-Reaction (Ministers)

MINISTERS, DEPUTY MINISTERS PLEDGE THEIR BEST EFFORT

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Several ministers and deputy ministers including the new faces appointed to the federal administrative lineup have pledged to give their best effort despite of the tremendous challenges ahead.

Datuk Paduka Dr Abdul Hamid Othman who was reappointed as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department said he faced the most challenging task of returning Islamic understanding among Muslims in the country.

"I am aware that the tasks this time around has become increasingly daunting as many ulamas from PAS have turn opposition. We should make them and the whole community understand that administering the country and politics are not against the aqidah (faith)," he said when contacted.

The new federal administrative lineup was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Putrajaya this evening.

Abdul Hamid who lost to PAS' Datuk Shanon Ahmad in the Sik parliamentary constituency by 478 votes in the recent general election will be appointed senator.

He thanked the Prime Minister for having the confidence in him to serve in the Cabinet.

Abdul Hamid said he would request assistance from fellow ulamas in making suggestions to improve the public awareness on politics and religion.

Asked on his plans, Abdul Hamid said he would hold courses and seminars for religious leaders to enable the correct dissemination of religious principles especially among the younger generation.

"We should not be too emotional when discussing religious issues...if everything is accepted with calm minds then Muslims can grow strong and developed," said Abdul HAMid.

Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn, who was appointed as the Human Resources Minister, said he would use his experience as the Deputy Education Minister to help implement his new duties.

"I will use my past experience to improve productivity," he said when contacted at his house here.

Fong said education and human resources did not vary greatly as education was the main contributor for human resources.

"I will seek advice from Datuk Lim Ah Lek (the previous Human Resource Minister) for me to carry out my new duties smoothly," he said.

Fong said he hoped the close relations forged between Lim and trade unions would remain.

Thanking Dr Mahathir and MCA president Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik, Fong said his appointment as Human Resources Minister was a mark of respect and should not be put to waste.

Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil who was appointed Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department pledged to work hard with other women leaders to improve the gender's progress in the new millenium.

"Other women leaders should work hard in bringing development by focussing on leadership quality," she said when contacted today.

Shahrizat, 46, said she would continue to provide her best effort for Lembah Pantai constituents.

Prior to today's appointment, Shahrizat was the parliamentary Secretary to the Youth and Sports Ministry.

Deputy Minister of Energy, Communications and Multimedia Datuk Tan Chai Ho pledged to give his best effort to improve the ministry's performance.

Tan said the ministry was a vital organisation in facing the new millenium and the Y2K challenges.

Tan, 50, who was the Parliamentary Secretary for the Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Ministry in the previous federal administrative lineup has been involved in politics for 27 years.

In the last general election, he won the Bandar Tun Razak parliamentary constituency, defeating Keadilan deputy president Dr Chandra Muzaffar.

In KANGAR, Datuk Azmi Khalid who was named Rural Development Minister thanked the people for returning him as the Padang Besar member of parliament.

Azmi, who is the former Deputy Home Minister is the first leader from Perlis to be made a full minister.

In IPOH, former Menteri Besar Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib was thankful after learning of his appointment as the Deputy Transport Minister.

Ramli said he accepted the appointment even though he had placed "higher hopes".

"The appointment of Cabinet members is the Prime Minister's prerogative," he said.

In PEKAN, Wanita MCA chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen, who was appointed the Deputy Culture, Arts and Tourism said her tasks were challenging as tourism was among the major contributors to the country's economy.

--BERNAMA

TM zul