

10 DEC 1999

Mahathir-Musa

MUSA'S APPOINTMENT TO PROVIDE NEW IDEAS IN EDUCATION, SAYS DR MAHATHIR

PUTRAJAYA, Dec 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the appointment of former Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) Vice Chancellor Tan Sri Musa Mohamad as Education Minister is aimed at injecting new ideas in education.

He said the appointment of an "outsider" would give an opportunity to capable intellectuals to contribute to the government.

"Maybe there are new ideas that can be injected because we find many from amongst the intellectuals outside, for example, who cannot join Umno effectively because the process of promotion at the branch and division level takes too long," he said at a press conference to announce his new cabinet line-up here.

Musa from Pulau Pinang Umno, who will be appointed a senator, is among five new faces in the cabinet announced by Dr Mahathir.

He will take over from Datuk Seri Najib Tun Abdul Razak who will become Defence Minister.

Musa will be assisted by another senator, Datuk Abdul Aziz Samsuddin, who is also Political Secretary to the Prime Minister, and Datuk Hon Choon Kim as Deputy Ministers.

Former Universiti Malaya lecturer Dr Mahadzir Mohd Khir, who won the Sungai Petani parliamentary seat in the recent general election, was appointed as Parliamentary Secretary to the Education Ministry.

Dr Mahathir presented his new cabinet list to Yang di-Pertuan Agong Sultan Salahuddin Abdul Aziz Shah at Istana Negara this morning for his consent.

Asked whether Najib's transfer to the Ministry of Defence had anything to do with his poor achievement during the recent general election when he won with a slim majority, he replied: "No, it's because we want a new minister from outside."

Also present at the press conference was Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

-- BERNAMA

AFY MAI