

11 DEC 1999

Ong-Housing

ONG TO ENSURE CONTINUITY IN MINISTRY'S PLANNING

KUALA LUMPUR, Dec 11 (Bernama) -- Newly appointed Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Ong Ka Ting has pledged to ensure continuity in the ministry's planning and to consider public feedback when discharging his duties.

Ong said housing for the low- and medium-income groups would be among his priorities.

"When I perform my duties as a minister, I will study all plans laid down by the previous leadership and will take note of comments from the people and relevant bodies," he said today.

He told reporters this after opening the Malaysia International Book Fair '99 Incorporating Electronic Book Fair '99 at The Mines near here.

Ong replaces MCA secretary-general Datuk Dr Ting Chew Peh who has been dropped from the new Cabinet line-up announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad yesterday.

Ong, the outgoing Deputy Home Minister, said although his new responsibility would be heavier, he was taking it as a challenge to fulfil the needs of the people in line with the Barisan Nasional manifesto.

Saying his appointment had come as a surprise, he thanked Dr Mahathir and the MCA leadership for their trust in him.

Ong, an MCA vice-president, said he would seek guidance from Dr Ting, whom he described as his mentor and a hardworking and humble leader.

In his speech, Ong said he was just two months short of completing nine years of service in the Home Ministry which, among other things, is responsible for approving publications.

Ong, 43, hoped that his successor at the Home Ministry would continue with his unfinished tasks, which include the fight against dadah and crimes.

-- BERNAMA

NHD YBY