

05 JAN 2001

Hamid-Resigns

HAMID OTHMAN RESIGNS AS CABINET MINISTER

PUTRAJAYA, Jan 5 (Bernama) -- Datuk Paduka Haji Abdul Hamid Othman has tendered his resignation as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department to the Prime Minister.

Speaking at a news conference at his office here, he said the resignation letter was submitted to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad before the Prime Minister left for Myanmar on Wednesday for a working visit.

Abdul Hamid said this was to enable the Prime Minister to appoint a new person to oversee the implementation and administration of Islam and its propagation with focus on the Fardhu-Ain. Abdul Hamid was made a senator to enable him to join the Cabinet after his defeat in the General Election on Nov 29, 1999.

He failed to retain his Sik Parliamentary seat which was won by Prof Datuk Shahnnon Ahmad of PAS.

Abdul Hamid polled 13,026 votes against the 13,504 for Shahnnon.

Yesterday he indicated to the Sik Umno Division which he heads that he was among the Ministers involved in the Cabinet reshuffle to be announced soon.

The Cabinet reshuffle is expected to be announced after Dr Mahathir returns on Tuesday from his Myanmar visit.

"I made this decision willingly after discussing it with the leadership and after much thinking about the country's political situation particularly among Muslims," Abdul Hamid said.

He said from now on he would focus on Fardhu-Kifayah religious obligatory works.

Abdul Hamid said his duties had been to administer Islamic affairs at central level involving the development, management and propagation of Islam with focus on the Fardhu Ain and also exercising responsibility over Muslims in the country.

Asked whether he would remain as adviser to the Government in the management of the Fardhu Kifayah or religious obligatory works, he said this would depend on the Prime Minister.

Abdul Hamid said even though he had resigned from the Cabinet he would remain a member of the Umno Supreme Council and Deputy Chairman of the Kedah Umno Liaison Committee.

He would also use his position in the Umno Religious Bureau to continue his struggle to enlighten Muslims on the Islamic religious obligations.

He denied that his health prompted him to quit.

"I have moderate health. In case of heavy work, I have to take a longer rest, that's all" he said.

-- BERNAMA

NHA AHH AAM