

Chan gets Transport

STAR 25 JUN 2003

PM makes 8 new appointments

PUTRAJAYA: MCA deputy president Datuk Chan Keng Choy has been named Transport Minister in a minor government reshuffle to adjust to the recent leadership changes in the party following the resignation of Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik.

It involves four other leaders in the MCA as well as three from the People's Progressive Party (PPP), Parti Pesaka Bumiputra Bersatu (PBB) and Umno.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, who announced the changes here yesterday morning, said the appointments would take effect after consent is obtained from the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalulail.

He told reporters at Parliament House in Kuala Lumpur later that the changes among MCA leaders were made because the Government needed replacements for certain posts in several ministries.

New MCA chief Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting would remain the Housing and Local Government Minister.

The other two ministers from the party - Datuk Dr Fong Chan Onn (Human Resources) and Datuk Chua Jui Meng (Health) - also kept their Cabinet posts.

Chan was Deputy Finance Minister II, which is

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Reward for performance

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now held by Wanita MCA chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen following the reshuffle.

Her previous post of Deputy Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister has been given to International Trade and Industry parliamentary secretary Datuk Fu Ah Kiow.

This was the first time in more than 20 years that a woman has been appointed as a Deputy Finance Minister, after Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz (now international Trade and industry Minister) had held the post between 1977 and 1980.

Another parliamentary secretary from the MCA, Datuk Donald Lim (Transport), has been elevated to deputy minister in the Information Ministry.

In other appointments, PPP president Datuk M. Kayveas has been redesignated as Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department, moving from the Housing and Local Government Ministry.

PBB Youth leader Datuk Douglas Uggah Embass, who was the Deputy Minister in the PM's Department, is now the Deputy Transport Minister.

Two Members of Parliament - one each from Umno and MCA - have been made parliamentary secretaries.

They are Ipoh Barat MP Datuk Ho Cheong Sing in the International Trade and Industry Ministry and Arau MP Datuk Mastikah Junaidah Husin, who has been appointed to the newly-created post in the Women and Family Development Ministry.

Dr Mahathir, when asked about the post of Deputy Minister in the Housing and Local Government Ministry, said: "We will find a candidate for the post."

The Prime Minister said Chan's promotion was based on his ability and experience.

"We do not discriminate against anyone. We do not recognise Team A, Team B, Team C or Team D," he said, when asked whether the many MCA appointments signalled that problems in the party had been resolved.

On Ng's appointment to the Finance Ministry, he quipped: "We like women."

He added that those who performed well were entitled to be rewarded.

"There are many senior officers in the (Finance) Ministry who are women. The Budget officers are all women.

"If they are able, we are not gender biased," he told a media conference at the Prime Minister's Office.

On his advice to those appointed, the Prime Minister said he wants them to serve the Government well.

"They must remember that they are members of the Barisan Nasional apart from (being) members of their own party. As part of the Government, they must adhere to government policies.

"They may not make their own policies or announce things that are not decided by the Cabinet and the Government," he added.

At another media conference at Parliament House, Dr Mahathir was asked why there were two deputy ministers for the Finance and Information Ministries.

He replied: "It is normal for certain ministries to have more than one deputy."

He said the appointment of Mastikah as Women and Family Development parliamentary secretary was to assist the minister, Datuk Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, with her work.

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