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New portfolio a chance to provide accurate information, says Donald Lim

KUALA LUMPUR, Wed. - Newly-appointed Deputy Information Minister Datuk Donald Lim Siang Chai has described his new portfolio as a chance for him to serve the Chinese community by providing them with accurate information.

"I believe the Government intends to take the opportunity to send clearer, more accurate messages to the people, especially the Chinese community.

"With support from the public, I will do my best in assisting the Information Minister," Lim told reporters at Radio Televisyen Malaysia today.

Lim was at his second day of work at the ministry. Earlier, he launched the Radio 5 (RTM's Mandarin channel) Interactive Short Message System (SMS) Service and gave a 10-minute live interview on the station's Malaysia Cergas programme with deejays Lee Chin Nam and Lee Ling.

During the interview, Lim was asked to describe his feelings on receiving news of his appointment. He was previously Transport Ministry parliamentary secretary.

"My wife was the first to know about my new appointment. I thank Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for this promotion, and former MCA president Datuk Seri Ling Liong Sik and current president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting for recommending me to this post".

Later, to a question by reporters on whether he viewed his appointment as timely and strategic for the next general election, Lim said:

"Not really. My appointment is based on an understanding between the Prime Minister, Deputy Prime Minister and the Chinese-based parties in the Barisan Nasional".

He said his duties would be to ensure that , in an age where "information has no boundaries", Malaysians would be kept informed of the truth.

The interactive SMSservice allows Radio 5 listeners to send text messages which can be retrieved on computer by the deejay.

The deejay can then share the information, such as traffic reports, complaints, or weather, with other listeners.

RTM Radio 5 controller Lee Woo Sioh said text messages were a more efficient way for the public to communicate with the deejay, instead of calling in on the telephone.

The interactive system was unique because it was able to retrieve text messages on-line in Chinese characters, said the system's provider Grabix Sdn Bhd chief executive officer Azli Paat.

He said SMS and radio were new avenues for lodging complaints, as authorities monitoring the radio could respond immediately.