

BN leaders hail new line-up, thank Abdullah

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KUALA LUMPUR: The new line-up reflected the Prime Minister's wisdom and determination to take the country to greater heights, said MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting.

He thanked Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi for giving the MCA a chance to present its best team — including the opportunity for its new Youth chief Datuk Liow Tiong Lai to be a deputy minister.

"This again reflects the Prime Minister's wisdom to put the right talent at the right place," he said.

Ong, also Housing and Local Government Minister, reiterated the pledge of all MCA ministers, deputy ministers and parliamentary secretaries to work hard together with Abdullah to serve the people.

MCA deputy president Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy said the party pledged full support to the Prime Minister.

"I am thankful that the Prime Minister has given a chance for

the MCA Youth chief to be included in the new line-up," he said.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu, who retained the Works Ministry portfolio, thanked Abdullah for his continued trust in him.

"I will continue to carry out my duties and responsibilities to the best of my ability in the interest of the nation," he said in a statement.

"I also want to record our appreciation to the Prime Minister for retaining all the deputy ministers and parliamentary secretaries from the MIC," he said.

Ahmad Shabery Cheek, the new Foreign Ministry parliamentary secretary, said he was touched by the confidence Abdullah had in him.

"I am honoured ... a *kampung* boy from Terengganu given the chance to contribute to the Government. The foreign ministry is important because Malaysia is holding the OIC

chair and the Asean chair. I promise to work hard," he added.

Agriculture and Agro-Based Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin said it was time for everyone to concentrate on the tasks ahead.

"All the uncertainties have now been cleared and the speculation is over," he said.

Gerakan deputy president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon welcomed the Cabinet reshuffle, saying that it augured well for the country's progressive approach.

"We hope the new team will support the Prime Minister's agenda of taking the country towards greater excellence," he told a press conference.

Dr Koh, acting Gerakan president in the absence of party president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik who is on an official visit to Europe, said it would be an opportunity for new and old faces to serve the Barisan Nasional Government better.