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Judge-Remuneration

HIGH COURT JUDGE GETS OVER RM16,000 AND PERKS

KUALA LUMPUR, July 12 (Bernama) -- A High Court judge who resigns before reaching the age of 60, like what Datuk Syed Ahmad Idid Syed Abdullah Idid did, stands to lose more than RM16,000 in monthly salary and allowances.

In addition, the judge loses his entitlement to a chauffeur-driven Mercedes Benz 200 and pension and a gratuity.

Syed Ahmad Idid resigned recently at age 58. The mandatory retirement age for judges is 65.

Under Article 8 of the Judges Remuneration Act 1971 (amended 1994), a judge can resign after reaching the age of 60 but those who resign before reaching 60 will not be entitled to pension and a gratuity unless on reason of being medically unfit.

The salary of a High Court judge starts at RM8,900, with RM2,250 as house rent subsidy (or a fully furnished house which shall be maintained free of charge), RM2,800 in entertainment allowance and RM2,400 in special judicial allowance.

According to the Act, a judge is also entitled to one butler and one caretaker and a provision of RM1,500 per annum for house and garden upkeep.

Syed Ahmad Idid resigned on July 1 amidst speculation that a judge was involved in writing and distributing the poison-pen letter attacking the Judiciary.

Attorney-General Tan Sri Mohtar Abdullah, when announcing the outcome of investigations into the poison-pen letter on Tuesday, said a High Court judge who resigned recently, had been identified conclusively as the writer of the 33-page letter.

Mohtar had also said that the case was officially closed and the judge would not be charged with any criminal offence "in the public interest and in the interest of justice".

The Attorney-General, who is a former High Court judge himself, said the poison-pen letter contained highly seditious, defamatory and derisive allegations against certain judges including the words "sow", "ham" and "ball carrier" to describe judges.

He also said that the resignation of the judge was itself "a very strong punishment".

Yesterday, Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said the resignation was a sufficient form of punishment for the High Court judge who had quit.

The Prime Minister said: "For a judge, resignation is a serious act and may have repercussions on the future (of the judge)."

The Kedah-born was appointed a judicial commissioner in September 1990 before being made a judge of the High Court of Borneo in March 1992. --

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