

06 JUN 1996

Mahathir-MB

PM KEEPS UP SUSPENSE ON APPOINTMENT OF NEW KEDAH MB

KUALA LUMPUR, June 6 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad today continued to keep reporters guessing about the appointment of the new Kedah Menteri Besar by answering a host of questions on the subject but without revealing much.

Speaking to reporters after presenting excellent service awards to Home Ministry staff here, the Prime Minister said he would only announce the successor to Tan Sri Osman Aroff when he was ready to do so.

Last May 24, Dr Mahathir, on his return from a 12-day working visit overseas, told a news conference that he had accepted Osman's resignation as the Kedah Menteri Besar but had yet to decide on his successor.

However, Osman, when asked by reporters on his resignation, said the Prime Minister wanted to replace him with former Agriculture Minister Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, who is the State Assemblyman for Kuah.

Today the Prime Minister continued to field questions on the matter, but still left reporters seeking for answers on the appointment of the new Kedah Menteri Besar.

+ "Kedah, what about Kedah?" he said when reporters wanted to ask on Kedah politics after he had elaborated on the government's move to attain ISO 9000 certification for the public sector.

+ "I do not know, just thinking about it," when asked whether Sanusi has been given the appointment letter.

+ "He always comes. I recently met him in Langkawi," when asked on the purpose of Sanusi's trip to his office. Sanusi was seen entering the Prime Minister's Department today.

+ "I do not know, you ask him," when asked if it is true that Sanusi will be sworn in as the new Menteri Besar on Sunday.

+ "16 or 17?" when asked if it is true Sanusi will take his oath on June 16.

+ "When I am ready, I will make a decision," when asked why he was taking quite long to announce the name of Osman's successor.

+ "People are still studyinglah, not yet passed," when asked why he was not ready to make the announcement yet.

+ "I don't know. This is state secret ... I cannot tell you," when asked if it is true that Osman has asked for his effective date of resignation to be deferred to end of this month for certain reasons.

+ "Ask about other thingslah." Reporters then switched to the subject of efforts to turn around Perwaja. -- BERNAMA

AH YBY