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Mahathir-secretary-general

SABBARUDDIN CHIK IS THE NEW UMNO SECRETARY-GENERAL

KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 28 (Bernama) -- Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik was appointed Umno secretary-general tonight, replacing Datuk Mohamed Rahmat who has held the post since Decenber, 1990.

Former Public Enterprises Minister Datuk Dr Yusof Nor was appointed information chief, replacing Tan Sri Hussein Ahmad, who has held the post for 15 years.

The appointments were announced by Umno president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad after chairing the first meeting of the new Umno supreme council at the party headquarters here tonight.

He also announced that Tun Daim Zainuddin would retain his post as the party's treasurer-general.

Temerloh-born Datuk Sabbaruddin Chik, entered politics in the 1970s but rose to prominence in 1980 when he was elected youth leader of the Kampung Paya Jejawi branch in Temerloh.

The political star of this "kampung boy", who will turn 55 on Dec 11, began to shine when he was elected Temerloh Umno division youth leader in 1981 and won the Temerloh parliamentary seat in 1982.

An elected Umno supreme Council member from 1984 until he lost the post in the Oct 10 party elections, he has been the Temerloh Umno division head since 1984 and Pahang Umno Liaison Committee deputy chairman since 1991.

He holds a bachelor's (honours) degree from Universiti Malaya and a master's degree from the Institute of Social Studies, the Hague, Holland.

Sabbaruddin was Deputy Finance Minister after the 1982 general election and became the first Culture, Arts and Tourism Minister when the ministry was created on May 20, 1987.

Dr Yusof, 55, the Terengganu state executive councillor in charge of religious affairs, hails from Kampung Raja, Besut, Terengganu, and holds a doctorate in Islamic Studies from Cairo University, Egypt.

He joined Umno in 1975 and was appointed a senator in 1984.

The 1986 general election saw him winning the Setiu parliamentary seat but in the election last year he contested and won the Kampung Raja state seat.

He served as Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia deputy vice-chancellor before being appointed Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister's Department in 1984.

Dr Mahathir also announced the appointment of eight supreme council members

-- Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, Datuk Mohamed Rahmat, Datuk Syed Hamid Jaafar Albar, Tan Sri Abdul Hamid Pawanteh, Tan Sri Isa Abdul Samad, Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid, Tan Sri Ramli Ngah Talib and Tan Sri Hussein Ahmad.

The other two appointed members would be announced later, he said.

He also announced that Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid would replace Tan Sri Osman Aroff as the Kedah Umno liaison chief while Datuk Osu Sukam would replace Datuk Salleh Said Keruak as the Sabah Umno liaison chief.

Datuk Ghani Othman will replace Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as Johor Umno liaison chairman while Datuk Seri Shahidan Kassim will head the Umno liaison committee in Perlis and Datuk Seri Mohamed Zin Abdul Ghani, in Melaka.

Dr Mahathir also announced that he would remain as Kelantan Umno liaison chairman while the deputy chairman's post, which was previously held by Rural Development Minister Datuk Annuar Musa, would be filled

later.

Asked why Mohamed and Hussein were replaced, Dr Mahathir said: "We feel that no one is permanent in Umno, sometimes he has to go because he is not chosen or not appointed or for other reasons like ill-health, lack of interest or resignation and so forth."

However, he said, Umno appreciated Mohamed's and Hussein's services and that was why they had been appointed as supreme council members.

Asked whether it was necessary to change the secretary-general and information chief, he said: "Whether or not it is necessary, we want to change."

Asked about rumours that former Parti Melayu Semangat 46 president Tengku Razaleigh Hamzah or his deputy, Datuk Rais Yatim, would be appointed supreme council members, he said "maybe".

"We appoint not because he is the former S46 chief, if there is a reason to appoint ... we appoint, many should be supreme council members but are not due to certain circumstances," he said.

However, Dr Mahathir said that now there were no more S46 members because all of them had become Umno members and their backgrounds no longer featured.

On Youth and Sports Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Annuar who were not appointed to the supreme council, he said: "We do not appoint because they are ministers, we appoint because we want to."

Asked whether their positions as ministers would be jeopardised, he said: "Not affected, we don't have a cabinet reshuffle... it is not easy to reshuffle."

When a reporter commented that normally those holding posts in Umno were trusted to hold government posts, he said that sometimes there were exceptions.

Sabbaruddin told reporters after the meeting that he appreciated the appointment and added: "I feel that this the chance for me to show that I can give something to Umno," he said.

He also expressed his appreciation to Mohamed for improving the Umno management and said that he would meet the former secretary-general to seek his guidance on discharging his new duties.

Sabbaruddin said he would also meet Dr Mahathir to seek his views on the duties that he should perform.

Dr Yusof said: "I will study the relevant matters and discuss with Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad the priorities of Umno because information can play an effective role in the party."

He would also seek Hussein's views on the scope of his new duties. --

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