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LEAD Sanusi-MB

SANUSI NAMED AS NEW KEDAH MB, OSMAN TO RESIGN ON SUNDAY

KUALA LUMPUR, June 10 (Bernama) -- Datuk Seri Sanusi Junid was today named as the new Kedah Menteri Besar, more than a year after speculations of his appointment were sparked off when the former Agriculture Minister was switched from his Jerlun/Langkawi parliamentary constituency to the Kuah state seat in the April 1995 general election.

He will replace Tan Sri Osman Aroff who announced at a news conference in Alor Setar earlier in the day that he will resign as Menteri Besar on June 16.

The announcement on Sanusi's appointment came in a statement issued by the Principal Private Secretary to the Prime Minister, Datuk Abdul Aziz Ismail.

The statement said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad has obtained the consent of the Sultan of Kedah for the appointment.

The date for Sanusi to be sworn in will be arranged by the Kedah State Secretary's Office and Istana Anak Bukit.

Sanusi, 52, who is renowned for innovative ideas such as the eat more ulam campaign and his highly successful commercial promotion of young coconut, is viewed with high expectations by various quarters as the man who would be able to speed up development of the state.

He will be Kedah's fifth Menteri Besar since Independence.

Osman, 55, who led the state government for more than 11 years since 1985 when he took over from Datuk Seri Syed Nahar Shahabuddin, said he decided to announce the date of his resignation after getting the agreement of Dr Mahathir at their last meeting at the Prime Minister's Department in Kuala Lumpur on Thursday.

He told reporters this at 2.40pm after a nearly hour-long meeting with 28 Kedah state assemblymen from the Barisan Nasional at the State Operations Room in Wisma Darul Aman in Alor Setar.

Five other BN assemblymen did not attend the meeting. They are Sanusi, Badri Yunus (Tanjung Dawai), Datuk Beh Heng Seong (Gurun), Abdul Rahman Ariffin (Ayer Hitam) and Tan Hong Eng (Bakar Arang).

Said Osman at his news conference: "I wish to make an announcement...I am glad to announce that I, after discussing with and getting the agreement of the Right Honourable Prime Minister, have decided to relinquish the Kedah Menteri Besar's post on June 16.

"This means that my last day as Menteri Besar is June 15."

"I hope all Kedah Umno members and also elected representatives will continue to give their solid and undivided support to the party president.

"I wish to take this opportunity to express my profound thanks to all parties, the elected representatives, government officers, Umno members and all BN members who have extended their cooperation and support to me throughout my term as the Menteri Besar.

"To the people and government officers, whether at state or federal level, I also wish to record my heartfelt thanks," he said.

Osman said the cooperation he received had facilitated the performance of his duties and responsibilities at the helm of the state government.

Osman, the longest serving assemblyman in Kedah who was first elected in 1969, was sworn in as Kedah's fourth Menteri Besar on Jan 28, 1985.

He said his position as the Kedah Umno liaison committee chairman would be determined by the party president.

"The question of the state Umno liaison committee chairman has not been

discussed yet," he said.

Asked on the progress of Kedah under his stewardship, Osman said he was very satisfied with the achievements made.

"I am happy to the extent of what my colleagues and I could implement. I think we have transformed it from a backward state to a quite rapidly developing one," he said.

"I think this is a success, a good achievement due to the political stability in Kedah."

On his future plans, Osman said he wanted to take a rest after having served for so long.

He said his resignation would enable him to pay greater attention to his family. -- BERNAMA

MFJ YBY CTL