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Muhammad pledges support

Sa'odah Elias

SHAH ALAM, Fri. - Former Selangor Menteri Besar Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib today applauded the decision by the Prime Minister in naming Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs Minister Datuk Abu Hassan Omar as the Menteri Besar-designate.

He said Abu Hassan, who is also the State Umno liaison committee deputy chairman, is the best candidate as the next Menteri Besar of Selangor.

"Abu Hassan is one of the most experienced government and political leaders in Selangor and I have full confidence in his ability to lead Selangor to greater heights," he told reporters at the Menteri Besar's official residence at Bukit Megawati near here.

Muhammad said he would extend whatever help necessary to Abu Hassan when he takes over as Menteri Besar to ensure the rapid development currently experienced by the State would not be disrupted.

Asked if the choice of Abu Hassan as the Menteri Besar-designate had caught him by surprise, Muhammad, who is still the Hulu Selangor Umno division head and therefore a member of the State Umno liaison committee, said the question did not arise at all.

This, he said, was because the State Umno had already pledged to support whoever was chosen by Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad as the next Menteri Besar.

Muhammad also said under the State Constitution, the post of Menteri Besar must be filled within 28 days after it was vacated. Otherwise, an acting Menteri Besar should be appointed.

On whether this meant that a by-election had to be held within the next 10 days, he said:

"I am sure the Prime Minister has already taken that into consideration when he decided on Datuk Abu Hassan."

He also advised all the State Executive Council members, State Assemblymen and party members to accept Abu Hassan as the next Menteri Besar and give him their full support to enable him to discharge his duties without hitches.

He said it was important that the current political stability was maintained so that the State growth would not be hampered by internal squabbles.

Muhammad said he would also help to campaign for Abu Hassan in the by-election to enable him to secure a State seat.

Asked if by choosing Abu Hassan, who is a Member of Parliament for Kuala Selangor, as the next Menteri Besar indicated that there was no other eligible candidate from among the Exco members and State Assemblymen, Muhammad said that was the prerogative of the Prime Minister.

"There are many other candidates who are eligible but the decision is at the discretion of the Prime Minister and everyone should respect and support his decision."

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