

14 APR 1997

Assembly-Muhammad

MUHAMMAD GETS THANK YOU FROM STATE ASSEMBLY

SHAH ALAM, April 14 (Bernama) -- The Selangor State Legislative Assembly passed a motion thanking Tan Sri Muhammad Muhamad Taib, who resigned as Menteri Besar as from today, for his stewardship of the state administration for over a decade.

Government back-benchers and opposition members debated over the motion, proposed by executive councillor and Barisan Nasional assemblyman for Sungai Burong Datuk Mohd Aini Haji Taib, before it was passed.

House speaker Datuk Onn Ismail was visibly moved by its passage.

Hours earlier, Muhammad announced his resignation at a news conference following Saturday's statement on the matter by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Muhammad also relinquished chairmanship of the Federal Territory and Selangor Umno liaison committee and the post of Barisan Nasional chairman of the two states.

Muhammad, the state assemblyman for Batang Kali, was appointed Menteri Besar on Aug 14, 1986.

Mohd Aini said since that date, Muhammad had left the mark of an excellent leader who made Selangor a model state.

While expressing shock over Muhammad's resignation, back-benchers who debated the motion, threw lavish praise on the former Menteri Besar describing him as dedicated, bold and selfless in his service to the party and nation.

They included Teh Chang Yin (Pelabuhan Klang), Datuk Haji Saidin Tamby (Paya Jaras), Dr Pius Martin (Bukit Lanjan), S. Gopalakrisnan (Sungai Tua), Datuk Haji Mufti Suib (Ampang), Datuk Mohd Shariff Jajang (Dengkil) and Zainal Abidin Sakom (Hulu Bernam).

Saidin said just as Muhammad's appointment as Menteri Besar had surprised many, his resignation too was just as shocking.

He said many politicians, initially sceptical of his appointment, have since acknowledged Muhammad's ability to lead Selangor over the last 11 years.

In his tribute Dr Martin said Muhammad deserved to be called the "father of Selangor's development."

He said Muhammad was instrumental in guiding the state towards 11 per cent economic growth for seven consecutive years.

Gopalakrisnan expressed gratitude on behalf of the Indian electorate in the state, whom he said, was not sidelined from also enjoying the fruits of development under Muhammad's stewardship.

Mufti said Muhammad's resignation was not because of pressure from the foreign media but out of his sincerity in not wanting personal matters be linked to his party position and as Menteri Besar.

Mohd Shariff said the local media need not blow up the Muhammad issue out of proportion so as to paint a negative picture of national leaders.

The opposition DAP member for Bukit Gasing, Teng Chang Khim, acknowledged that Selangor's achievements in the past decade was due to Muhammad's leadership.

But, Teng said, Muhammad should have resigned four months ago when was detained in Australia for failing to declare to airport Customs the equivalent of RM2.4 million he was carrying.-- BERNAMA

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