

01 MAY 1997  
Selangor-MB  
NEW SELANGOR MB TO BE KNOWN TOMORROW

KUALA LUMPUR, May 1 (Bernama) -- The new Menteri Besar of Selangor is expected to be made known tomorrow.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim will have an audience with the Sultan of Selangor at the Green Lodge, the Sultan's residence in Shah Alam at 10 am tomorrow to get his consent for the appointment of the Menteri Besar.

Bernama was made to understand that Anwar will meet the press after his audience with the Sultan and announce the name of the new Menteri Besar, which will end rife speculation lasting for almost three weeks on Tan Sri Muhammad Haji Muhammad Taib's successor.

Muhammad resigned as Menteri Besar on April 14 after facing two charges in Brisbane in connection with his attempt to transfer RM2.4 million out of Australia. He was detained at the Brisbane International Airport on Dec 22, last year when currency the equivalent of A\$1.2 million was found in his luggage.

He is expected to be tried at the Brisbane Magistrate Court on August 19 to 21.

Muhammad's resignation was announced by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad after the Umno Supreme Council meeting which was held two days before Muhammad officially stepped down.

At a press conference on April 14, however, Muhammad surprised many quarters when he decided to keep his post as Umno vice president. Muhammad also did not relinquish his state Assembly seat for Batang Kali.

The new Menteri Besar was initially expected to be announced on April 21 after Dr Mahathir had an audience with the Sultan of Selangor at the Istana Selangor here.

However, Dr Mahathir informed the press afterwards that he needed more time to decide on the candidate for the post.

The Sultan of Selangor, in his meeting with the press, said that he wanted someone who was truly clean and not one who would only use the position to enrich himself.

However, on April 26, Dr Mahathir said there was no problem with regard to the appointment as all quarters, including the Sultan, had already given their mandate to him to make the decision.

There were various speculations by the media on who would be appointed as the new Menteri Besar but until today, 20 days after Dr Mahathir announced Muhammad's resignation, it is still a well-kept secret.

Under the Selangor State Constitution, the post of Menteri Besar cannot be left vacant for more than 28 days.

Among the candidates strongly rumoured to become the new Menteri Besar were Exco and Sungai Air Tawar State Assemblyman, Datuk Zainal Dahalan and Kelana Jaya State Assemblyman Datuk Mokhtar Dahlan. -- BERNAMA

AU AO