

14/12/1999

Isa, Exco members sworn in

Kamarulzaman Salleh; R. Sittamparam

KUALA PILAH, Mon. - Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad and 10 State Executive Council members took their oath of office before the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan Tuanku Jaafar at Istana Besar Seri Menanti here today.

With his appointment as Menteri Besar for the fifth consecutive term from 1982, Mohamad Isa is now the longest-serving chief executive of a State Government.

After Mohamad Isa, who is six-term Linggi Assemblyman, took his oath of office before the Yang di-Pertuan Besar, the Exco members were sworn in.

Five Exco members from the previous line-up were returned to their posts.

They are Datuk Lilah Yasin (Serting-Umno), Datuk Darus Salim Bulin (Johol-Umno), Datuk Shamsul Bahari Mat (Klawang-Umno), Datuk Waad Mansor (Gemencheh-Umno), and Datuk Dr Yeow Chai Thiam (Lukut-MCA).

The new faces in the line-up are Zakaria Nordin (Ampangan-Umno), Norhayati Omar (Pilah-Umno), Peter Lai Yit Fee (Nilai-MCA), T. Rajagopalu (Jeram Padang-MIC), and Datuk Woo Ah Lek (Senawang-Gerakan).

In his speech before the swearing-in ceremony, Tuanku Jaafar congratulated Mohamad Isa and the Exco members for their appointment following the State Barisan Nasional's historic win of seven parliamentary and 32 State seats in the Nov 29 general election.

He advised them to work hard for the good of the people and the State.

"I hope Mohamad Isa, his Exco members, and other elected representatives will carry out their duties in an efficient and trustworthy manner.

"They should not act by words alone, but show their diligence through action, good example and attitude to portray a clean, efficient, honest and just administration in the State."

He also warned the State representatives that their administration should be free of any wrongdoing which could tarnish the good name of the State Government.

"The State Assemblymen should realise that they have a responsibility in fulfilling the duty entrusted to them by the people.

"They should keep in mind the fact that the people will be watching all their actions," he added.

Meanwhile, Mohamad Isa said the Exco members should work hard in helping to run the State Government, with good co-operation from government officials.

Speaking after the swearing-in ceremony, he said the portfolios of the Exco members would be announced during this Wednesday's Exco meeting.

He said the first priority of the State Government was to complete all projects that were pending under the Seventh Malaysia Plan by 2000, and to make preparations for the Eighth Malaysia Plan.

Commenting on complaints by certain quarters over the retaining of some Exco members, he said the matter did not arise as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had approved their appointments.

He defended the new Exco line-up, saying it had the makings of a good and capable team which would help the State Government achieve its objectives.

When asked to comment on a directive said to be issued by the Negri Sembilan palace not allowing Utusan Malaysia journalists from covering the swearing-in ceremony, Mohamad Isa said he was not aware of the directive.

"This should not have happened as they (the journalists) were merely carrying out their duties," he said.

Journalists Meor Harman Shakri and Ainul Asniera Ahsan, together with photographer Shamsul Ariffin Che Omar who travelled separately to the palace to cover the ceremony, were stopped by policemen and palace officials about 10am and informed that they were barred from covering the event.

Meor Harman said a palace official had told him that the directive to bar them from covering the function came from the "Tuanku".

(END)