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### Isa defends reappointment

Kamarulzaman Salleh; R. Sittamparam

SEREMBAN, Wed. - Menteri Besar Tan Sri Mohamad Isa Abdul Samad said Lenggeng Assemblyman Datuk Ishak Ismail's criticisms of the reappointment of Datuk Waad Mansor as a State executive councillor were baseless and should not be taken seriously.

He declined to comment on whether the State Umno liaison committee would initiate disciplinary action against Ishak for not agreeing with the party's decision to appoint Waad, who is Gemencheh Assemblyman, as an Exco member.

Speaking after chairing the State Exco meeting at Wisma Negri today, Mohamad Isa said he was immune to Ishak's criticisms as the latter was always criticising the State Government.

"While Ishak's criticism is about Waad's appointment this time, he had previously stirred up other issues and would probably continue with his antics in the future," he said when asked to comment on Ishak's protest of Waad's reappointment.

Ishak had walked out of the swearing-in ceremony of the Menteri Besar and State Exco members before the Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan at Istana Besar Seri Menanti, Kuala Pilah, on Monday when Waad was called to take his oath.

Waad, who is Tampin Umno chief, had resigned as Exco member in May last year after he was charged with five counts of corruption at the Seremban Sessions Court.

Following a much-publicised trial on the three of the charges brought against him by the ACA, Waad was acquitted by the Seremban High Court on Oct 8.

Mohamad Isa said the main criterion for reappointing Waad in the Exco was that he had played a positive role in the previous Exco line-up and his services were needed by the State.

He added that since Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had accepted Waad's appointment to the Exco, no one should question it.

Waad, 42, was among five Exco members who had been retained by Mohamad Isa and who were sworn in with five new faces.

Meanwhile, the Anti-Corruption Agency has not received any directive from the Attorney-General's Chambers to withdraw its appeal of the Seremban High Court acquittal.

The ACA headquarters official who said this, added that the agency had also not been instructed by the AG to drop the two remaining corruption charges against Waad.

Meanwhile, Christopher Fernando, Waad's counsel for the corruption trial, said Waad could continue serving as an Assemblyman as he had not been convicted of any criminal offence.

He said for an elected representative to be disqualified, the person had to be convicted and given a prison sentence of one year or more or fined more than RM2,000.

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