

03/05/1999

PM: I won't remove Sanusi as MB

ALOR STAR, Sun. - Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today that he would not remove Tan Sri Sanusi Junid as Kedah Menteri Besar despite such calls among some Umno members.

The Prime Minister said some members had expressed their dissatisfaction with Sanusi because they failed to understand the rationale behind some of Sanusi's projects.

"No," he said when asked on the matter at a Press conference at the airport in Kepala Batas at the end of his three-day visit to Kedah. Sanusi and his predecessor Tan Sri Osman Aroff were also present.

Some delegates of the Kubang Pasu Umno division yesterday had suggested that Sanusi be removed from office as he was not suitable as the Menteri Besar.

Dr Mahathir, who is the division head, was at the meeting when the calls were made, but he did not address the issue during his closing speech.

Dr Mahathir said: "All these are due to misunderstanding and lack of explanations. We (Umno) will make them understand (the rationale behind some of the State Government's projects under Sanusi's leadership)."

He said that he accepted the fact that he and other Umno leaders must listen to the grievances expressed by Umno members and the people and this was normal.

Speaking to newsmen after Dr Mahathir had left for Kuala Lumpur, Sanusi said:

"I serve Dr Mahathir," he said, adding that if Dr Mahathir had not wanted him, he would abide by the decision.

On the criticisms levelled at him, he said the Opposition had manipulated the situation for their own political interests.

Sanusi said he had started proposing and implementing seemingly ridiculous and unpopular projects even when he was in the Cabinet.

Asked about the people being confused and critical about some of his projects such as planting padi on rooftops, he said these people did not understand the actual situation.

He said the tendency by people to remove other people and replace them was normal and "this has not affected me a bit".

Asked to explain complaints among certain quarters that the State administration was not business-friendly and there were no projects implemented by him which had spurred economic growth in the State, Sanusi said the State Government had to depend on how much money it had.

(END)