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Abu Hassan: Why I resigned

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DATUK Seri Abu Hassan Omar yesterday said he would rather resign from his post as Menteri Besar of Selangor than drag his sister-in-law and her husband into publicly denying allegations of a sex scandal against him.

"It's better I face the music myself rather than drag my family into it. They have suffered enough, what with having to put up with all these poison letters," he said at his residence.

Abu Hassan, who appeared emotionally strained, said ever since he was sworn in as the Menteri Besar, there were some quarters who were determined to oust him.

Initially, he added, they brought up the issue of the RM5 million expenditure to renovate the official residence of the Menteri Besar at Bukit Megawati.

This issue was raised during the first Selangor State Legislative Assembly by Teng Chang Khim who was then the Bukit Gasing State Assemblyman.

In the same assembly, Abu Hassan was also accused of incurring extra costs by staying at the Radisson Hotel while his house was under renovation.

Abu Hassan said the accusations against him did not stop there as he was also held responsible for the water crisis which hit Selangor about three years ago.

"They kept blaming me for everything that went wrong."

As for the poison pen letters, Abu Hassan said it began during the last Umno election campaign when certain quarters distributed copies of these letters.

In the letters, it was alleged that Abu Hassan was having an affair with his sister-in-law and that they have a son who is now 11-years old.

Asked to elaborate on the allegation, Abu Hassan said all he did was try to help his sister-in-law who wanted a child several years ago.

"So I got my best friend, a Chinese who converted, to marry her and his Muslim name is similar to mine," he added.

Abu Hassan said he thought that when he failed in his bid for one of the three vice-president's post, the poison pen letters against him would stop.

Instead, he added, the same quarters started distributing them widely - to all heads of government departments and agencies in the State, to Umno members in Kuala Selangor and members of the public besides being reported in Indonesian daily Jawa Pos on July 7.

"As if this wasn't enough, the opposition raised the issue at the State Assembly on Monday and subsequently it appeared in the opposition news bulletin Critic and Harakah."

This, Abu Hassan said, was the final straw as his family members gathered together on Tuesday night to discuss the allegation after he returned from an official function.

"We discussed the matter at length and my family decided that I should resign."

Asked why he did not want to clear his name, Abu Hassan said: "I do not want to drag my family into this even though my sister-in-law and her husband are willing to come forward and explain it to the media.

"It's better that I face the problem alone. I am already 60 and it's time I think of my family rather than my career. It's better that I

resign."

Abu Hassan said: "I worked because of them and now I am resigning for them because that is what they want."

He said that he was sad that pictures of his nephew at school were also published and distributed.

Asked what transpired on Wednesday, Abu Hassan said after he and his family had decided that he should resign, he, his two daughters, Selangor Umno Strategic Unit officer Datuk Hanapi Sulaiman and his political secretary Datuk Abdul Aziz Noh went to see Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad at his office in Putrajaya at about 5.30pm.

Asked what Dr Mahathir said, Abu Hassan said the Prime Minister told him that he could clear his name by getting his sister-in-law and brother-in-law to come forward to give their statements.

Asked why he did not do so, Abu Hassan said: "Being a Malay, it's difficult.

"I have to look into my family reputation and dignity. They have suffered enough."

He said it was not going to be easy even if his family members were ready to dispel the allegations against him.

Asked what happened yesterday morning when the delegation went to meet Dr Mahathir, Abu Hassan said their appeal was turned down as the newspapers had already published news of his resignation.

Abu Hassan said he would still retain his post as the Permatang State Assemblyman and Kuala Selangor Umno division chief.

"Let the Prime Minister decide who should take over the post.

Whoever becomes my successor, he will automatically take over the State Umno Liaison committee chairman's post," he added.

Abu Hassan said he was saddened by the incident and hoped the poison pen letters against him would stop with his resignation.

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