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Adnan takes over from Khalil as Pahang liaison chief

KUALA LUMPUR, Mon. - The Umno supreme council today agreed to appoint Pahang Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Adnan Yaakob as the party's Pahang liaison chairman, replacing Tan Sri Khalil Yaakob.

Announcing the decision today, party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said it was made on Khalil's request.

"This is at the request of Khalil and it is not to say that we do not have faith in him or that he is sacked.

"He is not sacked, but asked that Adnan be given more credibility. So he felt that it is better if he gave up his position," Dr Mahathir told a Press conference after chairing the council meeting at party headquarters here today.

Dr Mahathir also announced the appointment of Datuk Mustapa Mohamed as Kelantan BN chairman, replacing Datuk Annuar Musa.

He said Annuar had similarly requested that Mustapa replace him as BN chairman, "because it is very important for Mustapa to head Umno and BN in Kelantan".

Khalil, who was later asked by reporters to elaborate on Adnan's appointment, said it had nothing to do with a local Bahasa Malaysia daily's front-page report today which said Adnan was going to resign as Pahang Menteri Besar.

He likened such stories to melodramatic Hindi and Tamil movies.

"These are all Hindi movies, Tamil movies, that's the pattern (of such rumours), and I don't see people taking this rumour seriously."

Khalil explained the reason why he put in the request:

"I have always known that in order to strengthen Umno in Pahang, it is important for the Menteri Besar to lead the party (at State level), because in the past, like when I was Menteri Besar for 13 years, I was also State liaison chairman, and such was also the case with Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Tun Razak," he said.

Khalil said he had on his own accord requested that the party president agree to the suggestion that he hand over the position to Adnan.

Asked when the request was submitted, Khalil said it was today.

He said there was nothing untoward about the timing of his request and that he had wanted to do it for some time but could only do it today as the council had not met for almost a month.

Adnan, contacted in Mecca by the New Straits Times in Kuantan earlier, said the newspaper report on his position as Menteri Besar was false but added that he was not surprised over the story.

Adnan who is performing the umrah (minor haj) in the Holy Land, said he would prefer not to make any statement on the matter yet.

"I would make further statement on this once I return to Pahang on Thursday, after performing the umrah."

Meanwhile, the Pahang Umno liaison committee today stated its full support for Adnan to remain as Menteri Besar.

In a five-paragraph faxed statement issued by Pahang Umno, its chairman Tan Sri Mohd Khalil Yaakob said the State Umno had never questioned Adnan's leadership as Menteri Besar.

"Therefore, if there is any report which gives the opposite picture, especially concerning the Menteri Besar's post which is held by Adnan, such report is inaccurate and false," said Khalil, who is also Umno secretary-general.

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