

10/09/2000

`No right candidate for TNB posts yet'

KUALA LUMPUR, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today the Government has yet to find a suitable candidate for the posts of Tenaga Nasional Berhad's president and chief executive officer.

"We are still counting on him (Tan Sri Dr Ahmad Tajuddin Ali) to accept the offer," he said, adding that this was because he did very well during the four years when he held the top posts at TNB.

Speaking to reporters after opening KUB.com's new headquarters, Dr Mahathir said he did not know why Ahmad Tajuddin declined to accept the posts.

"Maybe he has other things he wants to do. Why don't you ask him?"

He said Ahmad Tajuddin's refusal to accept the posts could also be due to a case of miscommunication.

While waiting for Ahmad Tajuddin to change his mind or for the right candidate, Dr Mahathir said Datuk Fuad Jaafar would take over the duties.

On the appointment of Dr Jamaludin Jarjis as the company's new non-executive chairman with effect from Sept 1, Dr Mahathir said the decision to choose him was because of his business experience.

"Besides being a politician, Jamaludin is also a businessman," he said.

Asked about Terengganu Menteri Besar Abdul Hadi Awang's allegation that the move to call oil payments to Terengganu ihsan (goodwill) instead of oil royalty was a sandiwara (play-acting), Dr Mahathir smiled and said "everything is a sandiwara".

"I came here as an actor. Last night (opening of E-village) was also a sandiwara. I chaired the International Advisory Panel meeting, also a sandiwara.

"Prior to this, the payment of money to the Terengganu Government was also a sandiwara but now we have stopped the sandiwara and would no longer give the money (to the Terengganu Government)," he said.

Dr Mahathir said the money paid to Terengganu based on petroleum output was indeed a goodwill payment and not royalty.

"Do not make a mistake (between goodwill payment and royalty)," he said.

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