

30/05/2001

MB: All must respect appointment of Raja Ariffin

BUKIT KAYU HITAM, Tues. - Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain said all Baling Umno members must accept the Umno supreme council's decision to allow Datuk Raja Ariffin Raja Sulaiman to take over the Baling division chief post.

Syed Razak who is also Kedah Umno liaison committee chairman said this in response to protests from 114 Umno branch chiefs against the appointment of Raja Ariffin as the division chief.

Datuk Zainol Md Isa who won the post on April 28 after defeating Raja Ariffin was removed from the post when he was found guilty by the Umno disciplinary board of political wrongdoing.

On May 21, the supreme council endorsed the disciplinary board's decision to remove Zainol and appointed Raja Ariffin as the division chief.

Yesterday, a spokesman for the 114 branch chiefs in the division, Wan Mahmud Wan Ibrahim said a letter of protest, signed by all of them had been sent to party president Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad, his deputy Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Syed Razak.

However, Syed Razak today denied receiving such a letter although Wan Mahmud maintained he had personally handed over the letter in Baling yesterday.

"I am prepared to re-send the letter by registered post," said Wan Mahmud in an immediate response.

Asked about the branch chiefs' claims that the appointment violated the Umno constitution, Syed Razak said all points had been taken into account when the supreme council made its decision.

On claims that Raja Ariffin was unwell and could not lead the division, he said Raja Ariffin was a professional who would have withdrawn long ago if he was unable to.

To a question on how dissatisfaction among members over Zainol's removal as division chief would be handled he said it was not even an issue.

"Zainol has accepted the decision and resigned as an Exco member as a sign of respect for the party, so why can't the members accept it?," he asked.

He also said it was normal for some members in the division to feel unhappy about the whole issue.

(END)