

23 MAY 2001

Zainol-Resignation

ZAINOL GIVING UP EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR POST THIS WEEK

ALOR SETAR, May 23 (Bernama) -- Datuk Zainol Md Isa announced today he is resigning as a Kedah state executive councillor this week following endorsement by the Umno Supreme Council of a disciplinary action against him for resorting to money politics in recent party polls.

"I have no problem in relinquishing the post and will do so soonest," he told a news conference after attending the executive council's weekly meeting at Wisma Darul Aman here.

Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Syed Razak Syed Zain, who was also present at the press conference, said he accepted Zainol's decision.

Syed Razak said Zainol would remain as the state assemblyman for Bayu.

As state executive councillor Zainol was in charge of agriculture and rural development.

Last Monday the Umno Supreme Council endorsed the party's Disciplinary Board's action on Zainol whom it found guilty of resorting to money politics during last month's election for leadership of the Baling Umno division.

Syed Razak said Zainol's resignation would be formalised at the earliest possible time as Zainol need to first hand over the resignation letter to the Menteri Besar who would in turn inform the Sultan of Kedah.

The Ruler is currently abroad.

Zainol said: "As an Umno member I abide by the Disciplinary Board's decision and its endorsement by the Supreme Council. I back the party president's move to curb money politics in Umno."

The Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is Umno president.

However Zainol still maintained that he did not indulge in money politics.

"I did not use money and indeed I do not have money. No monetary transaction took place," he said.

He said he was faulted for misusing his powers as state chief of a youth movement to convene a meeting for its members at a Sungai Petani hotel on the eve of the Baling Umno divisional polls.

Zainol, 52, is serving his fifth term as assemblyman and is the longest-serving among the current state executive council members.

He first became executive councillor in 1998 and was Speaker of the State Legislative Assembly in 1995.

Zainol joined Umno in 1970 at the Kampung Padang branch and rose from the ranks to subsequently lead the Baling division in 1987.

However the following year, the division was led by Datuk Raja Ariffin Raja Sulaiman with Zainol as deputy.

In last month's polls he defeated Raja Ariffin by a majority of 107 votes to be division chief again until the Disciplinary Board nullified his election after finding him guilty of money politics.

Zainol urged his supporters to remain calm and united in facing the latest development and pledged that he would continue to serve the party and community.

Syed Razak said Zainol's decision to resign as executive councillor was his own and not due to pressure by any quarters.

The Menteri Besar indicated he would not change the executive council line-up following Zainol's resignation as he was convinced the remaining executive councillors could share the tasks under Zainol's portfolio.

The other members of the executive council were also present at the

news conference.

Syed Razak reckoned the image of the ruling Barisan Nasional and the state Umno had not suffered because of Zainol's resignation as executive councillor since the Umno Disciplinary Board's censure against him had nothing to do with his position as a state assemblyman.

The board, among other things, barred Zainol from standing for party elections or holding any party post for six years.

"I may re-appeal against the board's decision in one or two years time," Zainol added.

-- BERNAMA

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