

Idris apologises to sultan
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Beh Lih Yi

Former Terengganu menteri besar Idris Jusoh has sought the forgiveness of Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin - who is also Sultan of Terengganu - over matters which had incurred the ruler's wrath. MCPX

idris jusoh pc 250308 04"As a Muslim, I made mistakes. It's only human to make mistakes. I am willing to apologise for my mistakes," he told a press conference held at a hotel in Subang this afternoon.

Idris - the Barisan Nasional-backed candidate for the MB post in an ongoing tussle between the palace and government - said he tendered an apology to Tuanku Mizan during an audience with the King on Feb 23.

"During the audience with the King, I have explained that as a state leader, I made mistakes and I tendered my apology," he revealed.

However, he refused to elaborate on the grounds of his apology and declined to comment on whether the palace was unhappy over his handling of the Batu Burok and Rusila incidents in the state.

"It's a general apology. Muslims always ask for forgiveness when we meet," he said when pressed by reporters on the matter.

Asked on his ties with Tuanku Mizan, he replied: "So far so good."

'I accept any decision'

According to Idris, he was supposed to have an audience with the King on March 9 - a day after the general election - but it was cancelled by the palace 10 minutes before the scheduled time.

"I was not given any room (to meet with the King)," said the former menteri besar, who was flanked by state Umno secretary Rosol Wahid and a group of state assemblypersons.

Idris, who took office in 2004, reiterated that he will accept any decision on the tussle, including the possibility of foregoing the post.

Asked on whether he could accept the palace-backed Ahmad Said as the new menteri besar, he replied: "I accept any decision for the good of the rakyat, what is good for the people is good for me."

However, he disputed Ahmad Said's appointment on the grounds that the people's wish must be respected.

"We must get to the basis of the matter right. We must understand the concept of the constitution and parliamentary democracy. We must respect the voters' decision who voted for BN and BN has chosen its leader for Terengganu.

"We follow the basis of constitutional monarchy. We have the Malay rulers, we must be loyal to them but their powers are not absolute," stressed Idris, who was calm and composed throughout the 20-minute press conference.

'Unlawful' appointment

ahmad said terengganu mb istana According to a statement distributed by Idris' aide at the press conference, the former menteri besar described Ahmad's appointment as "unlawful" and contravening the state's constitution.

"As a result, the appointment was unconstitutional, unlawful and void ab-initio. In other words, Ahmad is prevented from discharging his duties as a MB based on the provisions in the constitution," read the statement.

He also emphasised that 22 BN state assemblypersons have pledged their unanimous support for him on three occasions.

Idris was also unfazed by rumours that 13 state assemblypersons who initially gave their backing to him have since pledged their support to the new menteri besar.

"I wouldn't want to speculate... (but) they are all here with me," he said.

According to Idris, some 20 state assemblypersons were with him at a closed-door luncheon earlier at the hotel to celebrate the birthday of Kuala Besut state assemblyperson Dr A Rahman Mokhtar.

Asked whether it was appropriate for Ahmad to start work today while the controversy remains unresolved, Idris said the question should be dealt with by legal experts.

PM to meet King

The crisis over the MB post started when the Terengganu palace rejected Idris, who was Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's choice to lead the state for a second term.

Instead, the palace suggested that Ahmad helm the state and subsequently appointed him despite howls of protest from Umno.

The Idris-led BN government won 24 out of 32 state seats in the last general election. PAS won the remaining eight.

The state Umno has also threatened to sack Ahmad if he assumed the post. The party's supreme council is expected to meet on Thursday to discuss the matter.

Meanwhile, Abdullah said today that he would be seek an audience with Tuanku Mizan to resolve the controversy as soon as possible.

In a related development, Malaysiakini learnt that Ahmad Said met with Abdullah at his Sri Perdana residence in Putrajaya for an hour this evening.

According to a source, the meeting took place at 5.30pm but not details were available.

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