

Ahmad Said is new T'ganu Umno chief
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has appointed Terengganu Menteri Besar Ahmad Said as the new state Umno liaison chief.
MCPX

In addition, the state's oil royalties - which amount up to RM3 billion annually - will no longer be controlled by the federal government.

The control of the funds - which was taken off the state government's hands after rival PAS took power in Terengganu in 1999 - will now be revert to the state.

Both decisions are expected to burnish Abdullah's image among Umno members in the oil-rich state in the upcoming party polls.

Abdullah made the announcement today following a meeting with state Umno leaders at a hotel in Kuala Terengganu.

abdullah ahmad badawi and idris jusoh and ahmad said and terengganuThe move is believed to have smoothed out three months of rocky relationship between the state and federal governments following the March 8 general election.

The relationship between the state and the federal government had been strained by the state's demand for control over oil royalties and a previous impasse involving the premier and the Terengganu sultan.

A matter of tradition

Immediately after the polls, Abdullah proposed former menteri besar Idris Jusoh be allowed to retain his post but the Terengganu sultan vetoed the premier's choice in favour of Ahmad.

What followed was two weeks of uncertainty over the menteri besar post where 22 state assemblypersons from Umno initially threatened to boycott Ahmad's swearing-in ceremony.

Ahmad was also temporarily stripped of his Umno membership before Barisan Nasional and Abdullah finally accepted the sultan's choice.

The Terengganu Umno liaison chief's post was left vacant after Idris resigned on May 29.

Traditionally, the menteri besar or chief minister of a state is appointed to lead Umno and Barisan Nasional at state level.