

'Broom award' draws flak

Cuepacs unhappy, MPs question method

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KUALA LUMPUR: Selangor Mentri Besar's awarding of brooms to under-performing local councils and state agencies to remind them to buck up has drawn flak from many quarters.

Many find his "broom bouquet" for poor performance in poor taste and crude.

The "broom award" was even brought up in Parliament yesterday.

The civil service umbrella union Cuepacs said it received calls from its members from other states complaining about the broom.

Cuepacs president Omar Osman said members asked if there was indeed no other way for Datuk Seri Dr Mohamad Khir Toyo to express his dissatisfaction.

On Monday, at an excellence awards ceremony Dr Khir gave a broom each to the Hulu Selangor District Council and Hulu Selangor Land Office for failing to collect assessment for 2006 above the stipulated 50% mark.

Dr Khir also warned agencies that failed to hit the target for 2007 to expect the same "present".

"We can understand the feelings of the civil servants attending the ceremony. The brooms were given openly, without even trying to disguise these by wrapping them," said Omar yesterday.

"We cannot accept such an act. Although we support the Mentri Besar's intention for all civil servants to improve their performance, there is a better way of doing it, such as giving the agencies a low star ranking or a reminder letter."

As civil servants who form the backbone of the Selangor state government were loyal staff, they did not deserve such a treatment in public, Omar said.

Public Services director-general Tan Sri Ismail Adam declined to comment, except to say that "there are many ways of telling civil servants how to do their jobs."

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TAN SRI ISMAIL ADAM

directive. There are many ways to 'skin a cat' but you have to find one that is appropriate," he said.

In Parliament, Datuk Raja Ahmad Zainuddin Raja Haji Omar (BN-Larut) questioned whether presenting a broom, which is linked to bad luck, was appropriate as an award.

"There must be other ways to motivate the staff. Certainly not a broom," said Raja Ahmad.

Bernama reported that Hulu Selangor District Council president Tukiman Nail will keep the broom he received in his office so that it can serve as a reminder and inspiration to the council's staff to work hard.

"It will spur us to do our best," Tukiman said when met before attending a meeting yesterday.

Having worked in the civil service for 30 years and due to retire in three, he said the council would redouble its efforts to ensure all set targets were met, if not exceeded.

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'Broom award' a very demeaning act