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Daim refutes talks of resigning

Zety Fazilah Baharuddin

FINANCE Minister Tun Daim Zainuddin yesterday brushed off speculation that he plans to resign from the Cabinet, but told a news conference that his work to revive the country's economy is almost completed.

"These are all rumours. Not true," he said, when asked about market talk of his resignation which began spreading late last week and dampened sentiment on the local stock market.

The Kuala Lumpur Stock Exchange Composite Index closed 1.1 per cent lower to 881.93 points yesterday from last Friday's 891.25 points.

The re-inclusion of Malaysia into the Morgan Stanley Capital International indices on June 1 also could not help the market hold its 900-point resistance level.

Daim said he will leave it to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to decide on his posts in the Government. Daim is also Special Functions Minister and Umno treasurer.

"I was requested to come back and I came back. If they say there are other suitable candidates, then I'll go," he said, while stressing that his work is almost done.

Daim also denied rumours of a rift between him and Dr Mahathir, saying: "I have no difference of opinions with the Prime Minister. I will advise, he decides."

Asked again if he felt his work was done, Daim said: "Work is never finished. There will always be new matters arising all the time, and they have got to be attended to.

Nevertheless, he maintained that there are many others who are capable of taking over from him.

"There are many of them, those who are very knowledgeable, who are talented, who know the country well, who know the economy well. I can name hundreds of them if you want, but we have no time unfortunately," he said.

Rumours of a rift between Daim and Dr Mahathir resurfaced after former Bank Negara adviser Nor Mohamed Yakcop's appointment as special financial adviser to the Prime Minister, a move analysts saw as curtailing Daim's position.

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