

Pick new finance minister immediately: Kit Siang

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PETALING JAYA, Sun: Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir should announce the appointment of a new finance minister immediately, DAP national chairman Lim Kit Siang said in a statement today.

"The uncertainty as to who would head the Finance Ministry should not be prolonged any further and a new appointee should be announced immediately"

He said the inability or indecisiveness of the Prime Minister to fill the vacancy when he has two months to decide is not reflective of a confident premiership.

Lim said Mahathir should explain why he has not been able to appoint a new finance minister after knowing of Tun Daim's intention to resign the past two months.

The surprise yesterday was not the announcement of Tun Daim Zainuddin's **resig-**

nation, but the failure of the Prime Minister to appoint a new finance minister.-

"It is now evident that he (Mahathir) has been prepared for Daim's resignation the past two months, like the appointment of former Bank Negara governor Tan Sri Ali Abul Hassan Sulaiman as special adviser on economic affairs to the Prime Minister," he added.

Lim said Mahathir was not being truthful when he replied to a press query regarding a successor with the remark "*belum fikir lagi*" (have not thought about it).

He said Mahathir, in his speech, on the occasion of the King's 75th birthday yesterday, claimed that Malaysia's economic growth is expected at between 5% and 6% this year, while market analysts are forecasting a GDP growth of as low as 2% this year.