

Ministers: Up to Pak Lah to select his team

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KUALA LUMPUR: The successor to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad can re-appoint current Cabinet members or appoint new ones at his discretion after the Prime Minister steps down in October, said several leaders here who declined to be drawn into a debate on the issue.

Gerakan president Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik suggested on Saturday that based on parliamentary democracy, all Cabinet ministers should resign – as a symbolic gesture – when Dr Mahathir leaves office.

The various Barisan Nasional parties should then propose their candidates for the new Cabinet line-up to Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, said Dr Lim, who is also Primary Industries Minister, at a Gerakan Chinese New Year open house here.

“After that, the ministers can take their oath of office, as if there is a new Cabinet altogether,” he said. However, he added, “But don’t ask me if I am going to resign.”

In Sungai Siput, Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said he could not comment on Dr Lim’s opinion.

“That is his opinion. We do not have comments on other people’s opinion,” he said.

In Ipoh, Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Tun Hussein said only Abdullah could decide his position after Dr Mahathir steps down.

Stating the issue should not arise, he added that he leaves his fate in the hands of the new Prime Minister.

“It is the prerogative of the new Prime Minister to select his new Cabinet line-up. I will abide by any of his decisions,” he said after meeting Perak Umno Youth members yesterday.

Hishammuddin, who is Umno Youth chief, added there was no need for Cabinet ministers to tender or offer their resignation until the time comes.

Perak Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Mohd Tajol Rosli Ghazali said good politicians should abide by their leader’s decision.

He likened a politician to a soccer player who should not question the coach’s decision to ensure the football team’s victory.

“Like a football player, all our movements are being closely monitored by our coach.

“A coach will only retain good players while those who did not perform well on the field will have to be removed to prevent the team from losing in an important game,” he said.