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Karpal: Lee should not overstay his welcome in politics

PENANG, Sat. - Singapore Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew should not overstay his welcome in politics by insisting on remaining as a member of the republic's Cabinet.

DAP deputy chairman Karpal Singh said today that Lee, who turned 80 last week, should not go on breathing down the necks of younger leaders who should be instead be given free rein to steer the country's destiny.

"In politics, one should realise that being over the hill and clinging on to power does not contribute to the national interest."

Karpal was commenting on a news report today that a majority of Singaporeans, through an Internet poll, wanted Lee to quit politics after their nation's elderly founding father said he would not retire while he could still contribute.

With the majority of Singaporeans being of the view that Lee should retire, Karpal said Lee's determination to stay on could cause his downfall in the city state's next general election.

"This will not only embarrass Lee but shatter the image he has built up all these years," Karpal said.

Lee, Karpal added, should emulate the example set by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad who, although younger than Lee, is stepping down at the end of next month.