

Daim: PM shouldn't hold finance minister post
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The country's prime minister should not also hold the finance minister's post, said veteran Umno leader and former finance minister Daim Zainuddin today.

This practice by a PM holding dual posts has been an unwritten custom that came into practice since the 1997 economic crisis, under the watch of former PM Mahathir Mohamad.

Daim (right), in an interview with China Press published today, said the prime minister as a country's administration chief, and also BN and Umno chief as far as the recent PMs have been, has too much on his plate to be handling the Finance Ministry as well.

He added that having a second finance minister to aide the PM would not help in the matter.

"The second finance minister post was added to handle the (1997) economic crisis.

"Now the crisis period has gone; we have both finance and second finance minister at the same time. Who is the real decision-maker?" said the finance minister of the 1980s.

He added that a PM cum finance minister would be subject to fierce criticism if the economic declines.

"A good system is where prime minister is above finance minister. So if finance minister does something wrong, prime minister can come and rectify the situation,"

"But if prime minister is finance minister at the same time, nobody dares to tick him off," he said.

'Anwar grandstanding'

Daim also expressed his take on several BN and opposition leaders, some of whom include DAP secretary general Lim Guan Eng, MCA president Chua Soi Lek and opposition leader Anwar Ibrahim.

He said Lim needs the time and the support of the new generations to effect the change that the latter wants to see.

On Chua, Daim said he believed the outspoken leader would be able to swing 20 percent of Chinese votes back to the BN in the upcoming general election.

He meanwhile thumbed down Anwar's performance, whom he said has been grandstanding but has achieved nothing.

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