

'Cabinet reshuffle, PM drops Najib'
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Among the jokes making the rounds on the impending cabinet reshuffle, according to veteran newsman A Kadir Jasin, is the one about the prime minister dropping Najib Abdul Razak from the new lineup.

Humour aside, the former New Straits Times group editor-in-chief said the prime minister must seriously consider Najib's position as finance minister.

"Not only has the financial administration under Najib sparked off various questions and issues, it is also a case of conflict of interest.

"When the PM acts as finance minister, there is no longer a process of separation of powers and arbitration.

"If there are ministers unhappy with allocations or the actions of the Finance Ministry, who do they turn to?" he added in his blog.

Furthermore, Kadir (left) said since Najib assumed the finance portfolio, the country's economic growth continues to be trapped in the region of 5 percent.

Kadir also cited that the budget deficit and national debt have escalated while the performance of the Ringgit has also raised questions despite Bank Negara's repeated assurance.

"So the PM must review the KPI (Key Performance Index) of Najib as finance minister," he said.

Furthermore, Kadir argued that the PM needed to focus more time on administrating the nation in view of the numerous challenges.

He said that the finance minister need not be a politician as a technocrat would suffice.

The veteran newsman also pointed out that his stand on this matter had been consistent even when former premier Dr Mahathir Mohamad held the finance minister post as well.

"A finance minister must not only possess vast knowledge on financial and economic matters, he or she must also be brave and firm.

"This is not a job for a weakling (lembik), or those who lack initiative and work according to office hours," he added.

'Don't give face to Chinese parties'

Meanwhile, Kadir also urged Najib not to give face to the Chinese parties in BN.

"MCA is still in the talking mode. But there is no evidence that it has got the attention of the Chinese, let alone, their support.

"The Chinese have rejected BN, so why is Najib still pandering to MCA and Gerakan. The Chinese said it loud and clear they do not need BN. Let them be," he added.

However, Kadir said a cabinet position for Gerakan cannot be avoided as it was promised during the Teluk Intan by-election.

"PM must prioritise the majority (the Malays and Bumiputeras of Sabah and Sarawak) who are impoverished. They are the ones who save BN in the last general election," he added.

Kadir urged Najib to discard "lame duck" Malay and Bumiputera ministers and replace them with the young who are willing to perform.

"Make good use of taxpayers' money. Reduce the number of cabinet members. Stop splurging.

"Put the people first, prioritise achievement. Walk the talk," he told the prime minister.