

Ministers, deputies to declare assets
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Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said all the new cabinet ministers and deputy ministers must declare their assets. MCPX

"I want their assets to be known to the public, that is important," he told Bernama.

abdullah ahmad badawi 2008 cabinet line up 180308 08Abdullah said they would be told at the new government's first cabinet meeting tomorrow about the matter and the time frame for them to submit details of their assets.

The prime minister however did not reveal when the assets declaration would be made public.

Abdullah added that at the meeting, he would also determine their direction as cabinet ministers and what they should do.

"I will advise them on their conduct whereby they must uphold integrity. That is most important."

The dos and dont's

The prime minister said he would also advise them on what they should adhere to and what they must avoid doing.

"The do's and the don'ts will be spelt out to them tomorrow," he said. "I want them to know what I expect of them and how they should run their ministries. That is absolutely important.

"They were appointed to serve the people. These are the things I want to emphasise (tomorrow)."

The premier, who is reeling from a electoral battering on March 8, announced his cabinet line up for the new term this afternoon.

Abdullah had dropped many big names in favour of fresh faces. Rafidah Aziz, who has held the trade portfolio since 1987, was the highest-profile casualty of the reshuffle.

Abdullah would not comment on the departure of Rafidah - also chief of Umno's influential women's wing - who is to be replaced by outgoing agriculture minister Muhyiddin Yasin.

"I don't discuss why. I think she should make way for someone new," he said.

Declare liabilities as well

Transparency International-Malaysia (TI-M) has called on Abdullah to ask ministers and deputy ministers to also declare their liabilities besides their assets.

ramon navaratnamTI-M chairperson Ramon Navaratnam said the organisation was greatly impressed with Abdullah's directive as it would be a step forward in strengthening transparency, accountability and integrity in the country.

"The directive is of historical importance and could provide the watershed and beginning of a new drive to fight corruption with a stronger political will," he was quoted as saying by Bernama.

Ramon hoped that Abdullah would also ask menteri besar and chief ministers in Barisan Nasional-controlled state governments to follow suit.

He also hoped that non-BN-controlled states would take up the challenge and undertake a similar exercise.

He said this would ensure that all political leaders would be covered under this significant instruction to combat corruption more seriously and set an example to private sector and government employees as well.

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