

**'Najib, here's what you should do first'**  
**Malaysiakini.com**  
**April 14, 2008**  
**Lim Kit Siang**

DAP veteran leader Lim Kit Siang writes an open letter to the new prime minister and gives him a list of eight priority issues for the first cabinet meeting tomorrow.

This is my open letter to Prime Minister Najib Abdul Razak and his ministers on the eight priority issues which warrant consideration at the first meeting of the Najib cabinet tomorrow:

Firstly, let me start by congratulating Najib for his appointment as prime minister and all the ministers of the first Najib cabinet.

The Najib cabinet saw the removal of seven ministers in the old Abdullah cabinet, namely Syed Hamid Albar (Home); Azalina Othman Said (Tourism), Senator Muhammad Muhammad Taib (Rural and Regional Development), Senator Amirsham Abdul Aziz (Prime Minister's Department), Ong Ka Chuan (Housing and Local Government), Mohd Zin Mohamed (Works) and Zulhasnan Rafique (Federal Territories).

No one shed any tears for the dropping of the seven ministers in the Abdullah cabinet.

However, Malaysians are outraged at the new set of ministers in the Najib cabinet, for they are not only another set of "old faces" but include 11 new ministers or deputy ministers who entered Parliament from the backdoor of the senate.

Worse still, they include "political rejects" like Koh Tsu Koon, Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Chew Mei Fun and Awang Adek Hussin who were trounced by the electorate in last year's political tsunami in the March 8 general election, making the Najib cabinet even more unrepresentative and unpopular than the second and last Abdullah cabinet.

As a result, no new cabinet in the nation's 52-year history could have got off with a worse start than the present one.

On March 25, 2008, I had sent an urgent fax to the prime minister on the eight matters which the second Abdullah cabinet should focus on at its first meeting the next day to show that it was capable of responding to the March 8 political tsunami and be on top of the changes demanded by Malaysians.

These eight issues concerned the immediate and unconditional release of the five Hindraf leaders, restoration of national and international confidence in the independence, integrity and quality of the judiciary; comprehensive parliamentary reforms and modernisation; an all-out drive to eradicate corruption; leadership by example on integrity by ministers and deputy ministers; the establishment of an Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC); public inquiry into the RM4.6 billion Port Klang Free Zone (PKFZ) bailout scandal and an all-party inquiry to enhance Malaysia's international competitiveness to enable the country to successfully face the challenges of globalization.

If the second and last Abdullah cabinet is to be evaluated on its success based on the key performance indicators (KPIs) on the eight issues I had outlined, the assessment must be one of dismal failure.

## **Seek a vote of confidence**

The new Najib cabinet cannot disclaim responsibility for the dismal failure of the old Abdullah cabinet to carry out meaningful reforms, as 25 of the 29 ministers in the Najib cabinet or a whopping 86.3 percent were in the old Abdullah cabinet, with two as deputy ministers!

I am taking this opportunity on the eve of the first working meeting of the Najib cabinet tomorrow to ask the new (actually mostly old) ministers to focus on eight issues:

### **1. Secure motion of confidence**

Convene emergency meeting of Parliament before end of April to secure a motion of confidence from the majority of members of parliament, not only for the most unpopular and unrepresentative cabinet in the nation's history but also in view of the national and international crisis of confidence over Najib's credibility, integrity and legitimacy as prime minister.

Abdullah Ahmad Badawi secured a motion of confidence in Parliament in his first week as the fifth prime minister in November 2003 while Hussein Onn convened an emergency meeting of Parliament to secure a motion of confidence in his first fortnight in office as third prime minister when succeeding Tun Razak in January 1976 when Razak died of leukaemia in London.

### **2. Clarify 1Malaysia motto**

Spell out clearly whether the new Najib motto of '1Malaysia' is just a camouflage for 'Ketuanan Melayu', itself a camouflage for 'Ketuanan Umnoputras' - which was quite explicit in the Mingguan Malaysia interview of Deputy Prime Minister Muhyiddin Yassin.

The MCA response that Muhyiddin's interview was contrary to Najib's 1Malaysia lacks credibility, especially with Muhyiddin's pledge yesterday to help Najib achieve his vision of 1Malaysia.

najib announce new cabinet lineup 090409 07The least the Najib cabinet should do tomorrow is to repudiate Muhyiddin's retrogressive and racist views in his Mingguan Malaysia as not representing the 1Malaysia objective, that 1Malaysia is not equivalent to the Ketuanan Melayu concept, and the whole cabinet should apologise for Muhyiddin's interview if Muhyiddin is not prepared to make a personal apology over it.

### **3. Make a stand on corruption**

Declare corruption as Public Enemy No 1 and ask all ministers who are not prepared to support an all-out war against corruption to resign.

The big difference between the first 11 days of the first Abdullah premiership with that of Najib is that Abdullah had already repeatedly declared a war against corruption while Najib had not even mentioned corruption once in the past 11 days.

In his maiden speech on his fourth day as prime minister, made in Parliament on Nov 3, 2003, Abdullah pledged to lead a government that was "clean, incorruptible, modest and

beyond suspicion" - none of these four qualities had even been mentioned by Najib in his 11 days as prime minister!

It is sad public knowledge that the Abdullah premiership failed to "walk the talk" and chalked up an abysmal failure in anti-corruption efforts, as reflected in the plunge of Malaysia's Transparency International Corruption Perception Index from No 37 in 2003 to No 47 in 2008.

But this failure cannot be blamed on one person, Abdullah, but must be shared by the new Najib cabinet as over 86 percent of the Najib cabinet were in the previous Abdullah cabinet.

#### **4. Top priority on economic crisis**

Give top priority to the economic crisis. The Najib cabinet should focus on rallying and uniting all Malaysians to face the worst global economic crisis and stop playing political games which only divide the people and undermine Malaysia's resilience and capability to recover from the economic crisis in the shortest possible time.

This is why the two economic stimulus packages of RM7 billion and RM60 billion respectively had failed to make any significant impact to address the economic crisis because their conception and implementation were driven by politics rather than economics.

#### **5. Hold election in Perak**

End the undemocratic, unethical, illegal and unconstitutional power grab in Perak.

The worst example of the Najib premiership playing divisive politics when the country is facing a deepening economic crisis following the global financial meltdown is the undemocratic, unethical, illegal and unconstitutional power grab in Perak.

perak state govt crisis the rain tree assembly 040309 06The cabinet should heed the clear messages in the Bukit Gantang and Bukit Selambau by-elections on April 7 and end the two-month political and constitutional stalemate by returning the mandate to the Perak voters.

Dissolve the Perak state assembly and hold Perak state general election so that the people of Perak and Malaysia can unite to "fight economics" instead of "fight politics".

#### **6. Set up IPCMC fast**

Police must get back to their first job to ensure personal safety of citizens, visitors and investors and check spiralling crime.

The latest case of a Singaporean, Kalaiarasan Thorasamy, 42, butcher, who was killed on his way to visit his nephew in Johor on Sunday night when he was set upon by a gang of parang-wielding men, together with a spate of horrible crimes in Johor Bahru in the past few days, have again accented the notoriety of Johor Bahru as the crime capital in the country.

rembau polisIt was to ensure that Malaysia has an efficient, incorruptible, professional world-class police service which could keep crime low and uphold human rights that the Royal Police Commission announced by Abdullah in his first 100 days recommended the establishment of an Independent Police Complaints and Misconduct Commission (IPCMC).

One of the biggest failures of the Abdullah premiership is its inability to implement the IPCMC proposal.

The Najib cabinet cannot send a clearer message that it is serious about implementing the Royal Police Commission proposals for an world-class police service, to keep crime low and end police abuses like the Kugan death in police custody, than to announce that it is committed to the establishment of IPCMC.

## **7. Repeal all draconian laws**

Repeal ISA and all draconian and undemocratic laws.

To demonstrate that Najib is sincere and serious about a "comprehensive review of the Internal Security Act", the cabinet tomorrow should make a three-point commitment, viz:

- \* that the government would not resort to the ISA detention-without-trial law pending the review and announce the suspension of the detention-without-trial provisions of ISA for two years;

- \* that the ISA review, which include the repeal, is part of a comprehensive review of undemocratic, repressive and draconian laws including the Police Act, the Printing Presses and Publications Act, the Official Secrets Act, the Sedition Act, etc.

- \* that the "comprehensive review" would be conducted by an independent and credible Royal Commission comprising members respected by Malaysians for their human rights record and work.

## **8. First-World Parliament**

A full commitment to comprehensive parliamentary reform and modernization including an Opposition MP to head the Public Accounts Committee, ministerial status for parliamentary Opposition Leader, a full Select Committee system headed by Parliamentarians where every ministry is shadowed by a select committee and the allocation of opposition days in Parliament where the parliamentary business is decided by the opposition.

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