

# Cabinet list out by tomorrow

The Star - 17/3/2008

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## Istana ready for Wednesday swearing-in

**PUTRAJAYA:** Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi is set to announce his new Cabinet, expected to be a smaller one by tomorrow, at the latest.

The Prime Minister had since Thursday begun the process of forming his new Cabinet by meeting leaders of Barisan Nasional component parties to discuss possible ministerial candidates.

Abdullah was said to have worked over the weekend to fine-tune the list. He was seen leaving Seri Perdana to his office at 10.30am yesterday. He only went home at around 5.45pm.

It was learnt that he was joined at the office yesterday by Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak and the two men put the finishing touches to the list.

Sources said Istana Negara was already prepared for the swearing-in of the ministers, which could take place as early as Wednesday.

Another senior Umno member said it was possible the list would be out today or tomorrow morning at the latest, adding that "the sooner the list is out the better."

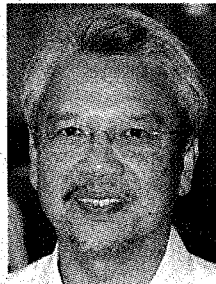
"Those appointed need to get right down to work soon.



**Ka Ting:** Declined any Cabinet post



**Samy Vellu:** Lost in the elections



**Ahmad Husni:** May be promoted



**Ahmad Zahid:** Minister post likely



**Tee Keat:** Proposed by MCA

"It is good if the Prime Minister makes it known who they are soon," he said.

A political observer said Malaysians were waiting in anticipation for the announcement of the new Cabinet, adding that those chosen would reflect the Government's direction for the next four or five years.

All eyes would be on key portfolios like the Finance, International Trade and Industry, Education, Works, Water, Energy and Communications, Defence, Internal Security, and Housing and Local Government.

It was earlier reported that the new Cabinet was expected to be

smaller than the one formed in 2004 because of the reduced number of Barisan MPs this time around, but the Prime Minister had indicated the Cabinet would reflect the power-sharing concept of the Barisan and include all communities.

Abdullah had 32 ministers, 39 deputy ministers and 20 parliamentary secretaries before the dissolution. Barisan then had 198 MPs but this time there are only 140.

There are also indications the number of ministries would be between 26 and 28 now with some of the ministries likely to be merged.

Those certain not to be in the line-

up are MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting, MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu as the former has declined any Cabinet post while the latter lost in the elections.

Bernama, quoting sources, reported that among the likely Umno candidates to be promoted are former Deputy International Trade and Industry Minister Datuk Ahmad Husni Hanadzlah, Deputy Information Minister Datuk Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Deputy Works Minister Datuk Mohd Zin Mohamad and Deputy Energy, Water and Communications Minister Datuk Shahziman Abu Mansor.

MCA has submitted four names for ministerial positions. They are party secretary-general Datuk Ong Ka Chuan, vice-president Datuk Ong Tee Keat, Youth chief Datuk Liow Tiong Lai and Wanita chief Datuk Dr Ng Yen Yen.

Prior to the elections, MCA had four ministers, eight deputy ministers, four parliamentary secretaries and one deputy Dewan Rakyat speaker's post.

Gerakan is likely to lose its place in the Cabinet, as acting president Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon had said the party was not asking for any ministerial position.

Barisan components from Sabah and Sarawak, which had performed exceptionally well, may see a higher Cabinet representation this time.

Sources said Parti Pesaka Bumiputera Bersatu would get at least two ministerial positions and either Parti Rakyat Sarawak or Sarawak Progressive Democratic Party would get another minister's post to better reflect the Dayak community.

Previously, Sabah had three ministers, one each from Umno, PBS and UPKO.

This composition is likely to be maintained, with several new deputy ministers posts given to other component parties.