


Newspaper	The Star
Date	16/5/2013

A well-balanced Cabinet of 32 ministers

Mix of old faces, technocrats and youths in line-up

The Star - 16/5/2013

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Major reshuffle: Najib with his deputy Muhyiddin by his side (second right) announcing the appointment of the new Cabinet ministers in Putrajaya.

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PUTRAJAYA: A mix of new and old faces are set to help chart the country's future over the next five years as Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak unveiled his Cabinet line-up nearly two weeks after the 13th General Election.

Describing it as a "balanced Cabinet", Najib's line-up will have a total of 32 ministers and 26 deputy ministers. In the last Cabinet, there were 30 ministers and 36 deputy ministers.

"This is a balanced Cabinet, that includes those with experience, technocrats and youths.

"I believe those with experience will contribute to continuity, while the technocrats will contribute through their specific expertise which is very important in providing creative and rational ideas for the Government to consider.

"The youths, aside from their skills, will also be able to bring the perspective of youths to the Government's attention," Najib said when unveiling his Cabinet.

Among the notable new faces are former Terengganu Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, who is now Education and Higher Education Minister II; Umno Youth chief Khairy Jamaluddin, who is now Youth and Sports Minister; Umno and Barisan

Nasional secretary-general Datuk Seri Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor as Federal Territories Minister; and Umno's Kota Belud MP Datuk Abdul Rahman Dahlan as Urban Well-Being, Housing and Local Government Minister.

From outside the political spectrum, Najib appointed Transparency International president Datuk Paul Low, Hindraf chairman P. Waytha Moorthy and Maybank president and chief executive Datuk Seri Abdul Wahid Omar as Ministers in the Prime Minister's Department.

The Cabinet also sees a fair bit of reshuffling in portfolios, with Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin heading what will now be

called the Education and Higher Learning Ministry with the merger of the Education and Higher Education ministries.

Umno vice-presidents Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Tun Hussein and Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi meanwhile have swapped portfolios, with Hishammuddin now helming the Defence Ministry and Ahmad Zahid serving as Home Minister.

Hishammuddin will also serve as acting Transport Minister in what Najib described as a temporary move to keep a position vacant for MCA — if the party is able to overturn its resolution not to take any Cabinet posts following its poor performance in the recently concluded polls.