

# New Cabinet should be smaller and free from court clusters, Tun M says

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*A big Cabinet will only consume more of taxpayers' money for the benefit of the appointed politicians, the former PM says*

by AFIQ AZIZ

THE new Cabinet line-up by Prime Minister (PM) Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob must not only be free from court cases, but also significantly smaller in size than that of his predecessor Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin's.

Former PM Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said a big Cabinet would not guarantee greater efficiency, but instead only consume more of taxpayers' money for the benefit of the appointed politicians.

Taking the example of Muhyiddin's Perikatan Nasional administration, Dr Mahathir described his successor's Cabinet as non-functioning ministers, alleging that more ministerial posts were created only to "buy support" from the MPs.

"I hope it (the new Cabinet) is not too big and not like Muhyiddin's Cabinet before," he said, as reported by *Berita Harian*.

"Do not present the ministers' posts as a way to bribe people," Dr Mahathir told the press in Langkawi.



Dr Mahathir (picture) urges Ismail Sabri to appoint only candidates with ability and competency, based on their background, to the latter's Cabinet line-up

On Monday, Ismail Sabri who was installed as the new PM last Saturday confirmed that the list of Cabinet ministers would be announced this week after obtaining the consent of the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Al-Sultan Abdullah Ri'ayatuddin Al-Mustafa Billah Shah.

He explained that the list will first be presented to the King before it is announced to the public.

For the record, Muhyiddin's Cabinet line-up had 70 ministers under 32 different portfolios, which is the highest number of ministers compared to the previous regimes.

Of that number, 38 people were appointed as deputy ministers with seven ministries having two deputies.

According to Dr Mahathir, who abruptly resigned as the seventh PM in February last year, the candidates should come with ability and competency based on their background.

However, he said Muhyiddin's Cabinet did not show any work progress.

"The ministers did not have any work, nothing to do, and only got paid. Do not be like that," said the Langkawi MP.

Dr Mahathir also reaffirmed his stance that Ismail Sabri should not consider nominating any leaders who have ongoing corruption court cases.

The Parti Pejuang Tanah Air chairman also did not find any of the government MPs credible for the deputy PM (DPM) post.

This included the group of Parti Pribumi Bersatu Malaysia (Bersatu) MPs whose majority was made up of those who switched sides to the then Opposition, and caused the downfall of Pakatan Harapan government led by Dr Mahathir.

"I only know who should not be the deputy PM, that is, the 'court cluster'.

"This group cannot be close to the government, they should be isolated and of course, they cannot be DPM," he said.

*Malaysiakini* reported yesterday that Datuk Seri Mohamed Azmin Ali is poised to become the country's next DPM, as a condition for Bersatu, or the Gombak MP's affiliates continued support for Ismail Sabri.

Quoting sources in Bersatu and Umno, the report said Azmin would pull his support for Ismail Sabri should the demand be unfulfilled.

Meanwhile, Dr Mahathir said he was willing to accept Ismail Sabri's invitation to take part in the

government's National Recovery Council (NRC).

Dr Mahathir has previously said such councils must be free from the government's hands and given executive power to carry out Covid-19 recovery agenda.

"I am willing to give people a second chance, but if they are only interested in taking credit out of it, then there is no point in participating.

"If we take part, the government must follow what the council suggests and implement it," said Dr Mahathir.

Meanwhile, at Istana Negara yesterday, activist group Reset Malaysia claimed that a group of 114 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) had agreed an executive NRC to be established and bypass the government to directly report to Sultan Abdullah.

With an aim to focus on health, economy, social and education issues, Reset Malaysia director Dr Abu Hafiz Salleh Hudin said the NGOs also proposed Dr Mahathir to chair the NRC and free from political interference.

Dr Mahathir previously said he would resign from his newly founded party Pejuang if the executive NRC is formed.

A memorandum to propose such a body was brought forward to Sultan Abdullah's officer yesterday.