

# The housecleaning begins

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## PM dissolves NRC while other agencies being looked at

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**PUTRAJAYA:** The unity government has begun cleaning up house and the first to face the chopping block was the National Recovery Council (NRC) led by Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin.

It has been disbanded due to an overlap of government duties, announced Prime Minister Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim.

The NRC chaired by Muhyiddin was a position that was created out of necessity at the time, he said.

“The NRC is disbanded, as there is an overlap there, leading to redundancy,” he said, adding that overlapping duties would only increase the administration’s operating costs.

“For example, the duties of the National Centre for Governance, Integrity and Anti-Corruption (GIACC) can be handled by the police or the Malaysian Anti-Corruption Commission (MACC),” he told a press conference at Perdana Putra after a Cabinet meeting here yesterday, without elaborating on its status for now.

The housecleaning also applied to the premier himself - Anwar said he and Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Zuki Ali had identified several duties that the Prime Minister could delegate.

“I have let go of many prime ministerial duties because some of them can be entrusted to the Deputy Prime Minister,” he added.



**Meeting the press:** Anwar with Ahmad Zahid and Communications and Digital Minister Fahmi Fadzil (left) during the press conference at Perdana Putra in Putrajaya yesterday. — KAMARUL ARIFFIN/The Star

Anwar has two deputies: Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, who is also Rural and Regional Development Minister, and Datuk Seri Fadillah Yusof, who is also Plantation and Commodities Minister.

The NRC was created to appease Muhyiddin, many believe. The chairman’s post he held since September last year also came with ministerial status.

After 17 months in power since March 2020, he was ousted as prime minister in August last year after several Umno MPs led by Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi withdrew their support for his government.

Datuk Seri Ismail Sabri Yaakob

was subsequently appointed prime minister and the Bera MP served for 16 months until the 15th General Election (GE15) last month.

On Dec 17, Muhyiddin said the NRC was just an advisory body and had no executive power to receive any allocation from the government.

He also said he had resigned from his post as NRC chairman before GE15 and, during his tenure, he conducted his duties pro bono, without taking a single sen.

Meanwhile, Anwar also announced that the reappointment of former Machang MP Datuk Ahmad Jazlan Yaakub as Felcra Bhd chairman has been put on hold.

“On the Felcra appointment, Deputy Prime Minister Ahmad Zahid has been informed of the matter and it will be postponed,” he said.

Anwar also said there appeared to be confusion on the appointment of politicians into such positions.

“I never said politicians cannot be appointed into management,” he added.

According to Anwar, several politicians and MPs might be appointed, but they must have the suitable experience and qualification.

“It depends on their professional capacity and performance, as well as (pledges) to adhere to rules and practices,” he said.

It was previously reported that Ahmad Jazlan would be reappointed Felcra chairman and Rural and Regional Development Ministry secretary-general Datuk Seri Ramlan Harun would carry out the formalities associated with the appointment.

Mohd Zuki issued a circular to the secretaries-general of all ministries on Dec 15, saying that the Cabinet had agreed to terminate the contracts of political appointees.

This involved federal statutory bodies, companies under Ministry of Finance Inc, government-linked companies and government-linked investment companies.

Ahmad Jazlan was appointed Felcra chairman in October last year and he formerly served as a rural and regional development minister from 2015 to 2018.