

**Dr M backs Daim on Cabinet clearout idea**  
**Malaysian Insider**  
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**By Syed Jaymal Zahiid**

KUALA LUMPUR, March 27 — Filling his new Cabinet with young blood will help strengthen support for Datuk Seri Najib Razak, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad said today, backing Tun Daim Zainuddin's view that the prime minister's administration was saddled with political "deadwood".

Influential former finance minister Daim was quoted by the New Sunday Times as saying that although Najib was doing a "fairly good job", the country's sixth PM was carrying "too many deadwoods", necessitating he reorganize his administrators and drop non-performers.

"I agree entirely. Lots of deadwood should be chopped down and thrown away and new trees grown," he told reporters after launching a corporate event here.

In an interview published in the New Sunday Times, Daim said most of Najib's ministers have "already past their use-by date".

"Najib should reshuffle the Cabinet. Bring new faces. People think he is carrying too much deadwood in the Cabinet.

"Most are already past their use-by date," he said.

According to English language daily The Star recently, Najib's election team will prominently feature young faces, with up to 40 per cent of veterans dropped from the Election 2013 race.

The report added that Najib, said to be in the final phase vetting the candidates list, "had identified quite a number of the old guards to be excluded, with some of them coming forward to voluntarily step aside".

"Barisan has 141 MPs, of which 75 have served more than three terms. Sources say that not all will be replaced but the prime minister wants to include new faces as part of his Political Transformation Programme," the daily had said.

Citing sources, The Star also reported that four previous Cabinet stalwarts are among those stepping down for newcomers, including former International Trade and Industry Minister Tan Sri Rafidah Aziz, former Natural Resources and Environment Minister Datuk Seri Azmi Khalid, former Home Minister Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad and former Housing and Local Government Minister Tan Sri Ong Ka Ting.

As for Najib's Cabinet, a reshuffle is definitely in the pipeline with several ministers expected to be dropped, the most notable being Works Minister Datuk Shaziman Abu Mansor, government sources recently told The Malaysian Insider.

A star of the Mahathir administration, Daim played a crucial role in steering Malaysia out of the 1998 Asian financial storm.

The former finance minister, known for his acute analytic skills, had also accurately predicted that BN would lose its parliamentary supermajority and four states prior to

Election 2008.

This time around, Daim said he was certain of a BN win but refused to state if he felt Najib could restore the ruling coalition's two-thirds majority in Parliament.

He again reminded Najib that allowing "new and clean" candidates deemed acceptable to voters would be key to BN's success, adding that the ruling coalition only needed some fence-sitters' support in addition to its close to four million members nationwide to procure a stronger mandate.

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