

Zahid new deputy PM, Muhyiddin out in Najib Cabinet reshuffle
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Datuk Seri Ahmad Zahid Hamidi is the new deputy prime minister and will also retain his current portfolio as home minister.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak announced this today in a live telecast, confirming The Malaysian Insider's report this morning of a Cabinet reshuffle.

Najib also announced the removal of Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin as his deputy, calling it a "difficult decision" but one he had to make to ensure that the Cabinet operated as a collective unit.

"The Cabinet must act as one solid team. I welcome vigorous debate, and can accept dissent and criticism. However, this process should take place in Cabinet as part of the decision-making process.

"Members of the Cabinet should not air their differences in an open forum that can affect public opinion against the government and Malaysia. It is contrary to the concept of collective responsibility that is the foundation of Cabinet government.

"It is also against the concept of collective responsibility," Najib said in his announcement broadcast on TV1.

Najib added that the Cabinet reshuffle was done after taking into account political considerations and the needs of his administration to ensure that it remained focused on implementing Malaysia's development.

"The decision to replace Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin was very difficult, but leadership is about doing what you think is right. To deliver for Malaysia, I must have a solid and unified team moving in the same direction.

"Nevertheless, I thank Muhyiddin for all his work and dedication to the government and country, as I do all those ministers who are no longer in the Cabinet.

"My decision to replace Muhyiddin with Zahid... was made in view of political considerations and the interests of the administration so that my administration will always be committed and focused to the country's development and to fulfilling the promises made by Barisan Nasional the people in the 13th general elections," Najib said.

Zahid meanwhile said his appointment as deputy prime minister was "not a reward" but a responsibility towards the various races in Malaysia.

Also a casualty in today's reshuffle was Umno vice-president Datuk Seri Mohd Shafie Apdal who was dropped as rural and regional development minister.

He had been vocal in his criticism of Putrajaya's handling of the 1MDB crisis.

Datuk Seri Hasan Malek, the Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister, was also dropped and replaced by Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin, who was deputy foreign minister before this.

MIC's embattled leader Datuk Seri G. Palanivel was also replaced as Natural Resources and Environment Minister by former deputy home minister Datuk Dr Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar.

In total, seven new ministers and nine deputies were appointed.

Other key appointments include the comeback of Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said as minister in the Prime Minister's Department and MCA secretary-general Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan as Second Minister of International Trade and Industry.

A staunch Najib defender, Sabah legislative assembly Speaker Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Salleh Said Keruak, will also be made a senator, and Communications and Multimedia Minister.

Another notable impact of the Cabinet reshuffle and new appointments is the promotion of Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed to Deputy Home Minister, leaving Parliament's Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in uncertainty in the midst of a probe into debt-ridden state investor 1Malaysia Development Bhd (1MDB). <http://www.themalaysianinsider.com/malaysia/article/pac-members-elevation-into-cabinet-puts-1mdb-probe-in-doubt>

Besides Nur Jazlan, three other PAC members have been elevated into the Cabinet – Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin, Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican and Datuk Wilfred Madius Tangau.

The new ministers and deputy ministers are as follows:

New ministers:

Datuk Wilfred Madius Tangau; (Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation)

Datuk Hamzah Zainuddin; (Minister of Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism)

Datuk Wan Junaidi Tuanku Jaafar; (Minister of Natural Resources and Environment)

Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid; (Education Minister)

Datuk Seri Azalina Othman Said; (Minister in the Prime Minister Department)

Datuk Seri Ong Ka Chuan; (Minister of International Trade and Industry II)

Senator Datuk Seri Panglima Mohd Salleh Said Keruak (Minister of Communication and Multimedia)

New deputy ministers:

Datuk Wira Mohd Johari Baharum; (Deputy Defence Minister)

Datuk Mas Ermieyati Samsudin; (Deputy Minister of Tourism and Culture)

Datuk Nur Jazlan Mohamed; (Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister Department)

Senator Datuk Asyraf Wajdi Dusuki; (Deputy Minister in the Prime Minister Department – Religious Affairs)

Senator Chong Sin Woon; (Deputy Education Minister)

Datuk Seri Reezal Merican Naina Merican; (Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs)

Datuk Ahmad Jazlan Yaakob; (Deputy Minister of Rural and Regional Development)

Tuan Masir Kujat; (Deputy Home Minister)

Datuk Johari Abdul Ghani (Deputy Finance Minister) – July 28, 2015.

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