

Zaid names Pakatan 'cabinet' led by Dr Mahathir
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Former minister Zaid Ibrahim makes wish list and appeals to coalition parties to distribute cabinet positions before talking GE14 seat allocations.

PETALING JAYA: Zaid Ibrahim has reiterated his call for Dr Mahathir Mohamad to lead any new Cabinet, while naming his candidates from Pakatan Harapan for various ministerial portfolios should the opposition coalition win the next general election (GE14).

Writing in his blog today, Zaid first expressed his gratitude to Anwar Ibrahim for withdrawing from being the coalition's prime minister-designate. He then called for other opposition leaders to move on with discussing GE14 seat allocations and the Cabinet composition, to show its readiness to the people.

"Opposition leaders should emulate Anwar, who has made a great sacrifice, and move on to agreeing on key matters necessary to form a new government.

"We still don't know if seats in the upcoming polls have been allocated in a way that satisfies everyone, but I would like to think one way to manage any differences in opinion is for the PM-designate to start discussing who can be a part of the next Cabinet," he said, adding that Cabinet posts would be one way of easing discussions on seat allocations.

There were a few surprises from Zaid over the Cabinet composition, including the suggestion that there be no deputy prime minister "because there is no legal requirement for one".

"This should send a strong signal to Anwar that the job is his, but that due process must first be followed," Zaid said.

The other surprises were for DAP parliamentary leader Lim Kit Siang to be education minister, PKR deputy president Mohamed Azmin Ali as finance minister and PPBM president Muhyiddin Yassin to lead a new ministry for oil and energy, that would take charge of Petronas.

"Petronas must be placed under this ministry, so that any future PM should not be allowed to control our national oil company. This is because under present law, only the PM controls Petronas.

“Muhyiddin is a senior minister and would be capable and experienced to handle this responsibility,” Zaid said, adding that the Petroleum Development Act 1974 must be amended to remove the national oil company from the PM’s purview.

Zaid, who joined DAP in February, also suggested Tony Pua of DAP be made trade minister, in a role that would encompass both domestic and international trade, Amanah president Mohamad Sabu as defence minister, DAP’s Liew Chin Tong as transport minister and PKR’s R Sivarasa as both attorney-general and law minister.

Other notable mentions were PKR secretary-general Saifuddin Nasution as telecommunications, science and technology ministry, Nurul Izzah Anwar as FT minister and PPBM youth chief Syed Saddiq Abdul Rahman (Youth and Sports) and Amanah vice-president Mujahid Yusof Rawa (religious affairs).

Zaid gave his rationale for naming his suggestions for the respective portfolios, and also suggested Khalid Samad and Gobind Singh as possible ministers in the PM’s department, to oversee reform in various institutions, including the civil service, parliament and election commission.

Referring to the various government agencies that also needed to have greater control and organisation, Zaid suggested PKR’s Rafizi Ramli as a minister in a new portfolio to oversee Mara, Felcra, Risda, Felda and Tabung Haji.

Home, foreign ministries for PPBM

Zaid said he believed that dividing the various portfolios, even if not naming specific candidates, between the four Pakatan Harapan parties, would be an ideal platform for the coalition to move forward.

On that note, he said both the home minister and foreign minister should be from PPBM, while DAP take the women’s affairs and child development ministry.

“Other cabinet posts can be filled up later but these critical ones must be announced now.

“There are of course many other capable opposition leaders, but we also need them to be mentris besar and chief ministers,” Zaid said, adding that good and capable leaders were needed at the state level as well.

“I hope these suggestions will start a conversation that can be helpful to the opposition coalition.”

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