

PM and Ministers sign Akujanji agreement

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Letter of undertaking signed before the King

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PUTRAJAYA, Wed. — Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad signed the agreement of good conduct or *Akujanji* today, followed by Cabinet Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Political Secretaries.

Dr Mahathir signed the letter of undertaking before Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail at Istana Negara this morning.

The King also signed the document as a witness. Present at the ceremony were Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi and Cabinet Ministers.

In the afternoon, all Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Political Secretaries signed the document before Dr Mahathir.

The Prime Minister endorsed the documents.

Abdullah handed over his agreement, followed by Transport Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ling Liong Sik who represented other Ministers while deputy Information Minister Datuk Khalid Yunus represented the Deputy Ministers; Parliamen-

tary Secretary in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Khamsiyah Yeop represented the Parliamentary Secretaries; and the Prime Minister's Political Secretary Datuk Johari Baharom represented the Political Secretaries.

Dr Mahathir, before the signing ceremony, said the *Akujanji* was not an oath as the signatories had

already taken an oath before they assumed their positions.

He said it was merely a statement of intent to carry out their duties to the best of their abilities.

"Although we have carried out our duties well, there is nevertheless room for improvement.

"I have visited many countries and I find our administration the

best as we take the hands-on approach. Members of the administration are also directly involved in carrying out decisions. They do not just leave it to others."

Referring to the way the Government handled the financial crisis in 1998, Dr Mahathir said the Government's establishment of a crisis management team and its careful daily monitoring of the problem was successful in bringing the country out of the downturn.

"I hope this attitude will continue with all members of the Government administration giving their full commitment in administering the country," he said.

The Government has requested the country's 900,000 civil servants to pledge their allegiance to the King and government by signing the agreement.

The agreement of good conduct was proposed last year to help keep civil servants, including teachers, students and academics in line.

Civil servants are required to sign it by the end of March, and university students in May when the new academic session begins. Cuepacs and student leaders have agreed to the move.

Vice-chancellors of public higher educational institutions signed on Jan 23.