

STAR 9 MAY 2003

# Top marks for Pak Lah as Acting PM

**BINTULU:** Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi passed his two-month stint as Acting Prime Minister with flying colours, said Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"Pak Lah has proven himself to be capable and can make wise decisions.

"He did not ask me to make decisions for him. He reported to me about some things but he did not ask me to make decisions.

"He did well in all his decisions. I wish I had taken a longer leave," Dr Mahathir told a press conference after declaring open the Petronas Liquefied

Natural Gas (LNG) complex here.

The Prime Minister said Abdullah would be able to do well when he takes over as Prime Minister at the end of October.

"I was hoping to resign after the OIC meeting but some of the countries (in the OIC) asked me to stay on for a while due to some matters.

"But by the end of October, he (Abdullah) will be the Prime Minister," added Dr Mahathir.

When asked about an article in *The Economist* last month, which criticised him and Abdullah, Dr Mahathir said he

did not want to waste his time worrying about it.

"They have this '*sikap orang putih* (white man's attitude)' that they are always better than us. Some of them feel that they can carry out regime change and find leaders willing to kowtow to them.

"If Abdullah does not kowtow, he will not be favourable to these people," said Dr Mahathir.

He said *The Economist* had been wrong before in its predictions about Malaysia and it was also not accurate in its assessment of other countries.