

# Unusual but brave move to peg ringgit

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## Ghani: PM surprised world with idea

**JOHOR BARU:** Menteri Besar Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman said Dr Mahathir Mohamad's bold move in pegging the ringgit to the US dollar to protect the local currency in the height of the 1997 economic crisis would be remembered for a long time.

He said when everyone was apparently at a loss as to how to tackle the crisis, the Prime Minister surprised the world with his unusual but brave idea.

"At that time, no one seemed to know what to do and were apparently just waiting for the worst to hit the country.

"But Dr Mahathir surprised

us and the world with that very unusual idea.

"Now it has been proven that his idea has saved us and the country from being colonised economically, and I will remember what he did for a long time," he said yesterday.

Abdul Ghani also recalled the day when he first attended the Cabinet meeting as the Youth and Sports Minister when Dr Mahathir instructed him to tackle the *lepak* culture.

"That was my first assignment and it took me nearly six months to come out with the Rakan Muda programme.

"Surprisingly, it took less

than an hour for Dr Mahathir to give his approval for the programme and on top of that he wanted it to be implemented on a large scale.

"It goes to show that Dr Mahathir is open to new ideas as long as it could benefit the people and the country," he said.

On a more personal note, Abdul Ghani described Dr Mahathir as a leader, a boss and a father.

"As a leader, a boss and a father, he told me to remember that the satisfaction of being a leader is the ability to bring about benefits to the people."