

# Pak Lah's pledge

STAR 4 NOV 2003

## 'I'll serve with integrity, efficiency and fairness'

**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi has pledged to carry out his duties with integrity, trustworthiness, efficiency and fairness.

The new Prime Minister gave this undertaking about his style of governing when tabling a motion of thanks to Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad in Parliament yesterday.

Abdullah, who got emotional at times while delivering his 30-minute speech, said he was fully aware of the need for him to carry out his duties in this manner.

"I am aware that I will be assessed by the members of this House, by the people and, above all, by the Almighty.

"The position and the power that have been entrusted to me is a test from God for this humble servant," he said, adding that he would have succeeded in passing the test if he carried out his duties with integrity, honesty and fairness.

"But failure to do so will be a heavy burden for me to bear in this world and the next."

He also promised to continue with policies that had been laid out by Dr Mahathir and leaders before him as a way of showing his (Abdullah's) gratitude for their efforts in leading the country.

In his maiden speech as Prime Minister in the Dewan Rakyat, Abdullah said he would build on the foundation laid by Dr Mahathir to achieve excellence, glory and distinction for the country.

"Dr Mahathir has left behind a legacy of success that has sustained political

stability, strengthened national unity, promoted economic development and given meaning to the country's independence," he said.

"In fulfilling my responsibility, I shall take stock and guidance from the successes of the leaders before me and seek co-operation of Cabinet colleagues and from all segments of society."

He told the House that he needed the co-operation and support from all parties to work with him to take the country to greater heights.

"I have inherited the responsibility of governing a successful country. The responsibility is heavy and I cannot do it alone."

Abdullah also called on MPs to be

open and ready to accept criticism and contrary views to ensure that the culture of democracy thrives.

"We must cultivate an image that is clean, incorruptible, modest and beyond suspicion. Democracy will flourish if all its participants behave responsibly. Democracy does not mean absolute free-

● TURN TO PAGE 3

# PM: Educate the young about family values

STAR NOV 2003

● FROM PAGE 1

dom.”

Abdullah said Vision 2020 would continue to inspire and drive the nation towards holistic development and in becoming a developed country.

“We must bring comprehensive human development in the areas of politics, ethics and morality. The National Vision Policy will continue to underpin our national economic policy.”

The Prime Minister received the traditional table-thumping of approval from MPs as he emphasised the need to recognise the importance of the role of women.

“We need to ensure that women, making up half of our population, are accorded equality and are not discriminated

against in the formation of policies, in the enforcement of these policies and in levels of participation.”

Abdullah said the family institution must be reinforced by educating the young on the right value systems.

“We must advocate the concept of a happy family to ensure that the elderly are treated with deference, respect and continued to be cared for.”

Touching on the Government’s agenda, he said it would work towards providing quality education for each and every Malaysia to reach their full potential and also develop a value system that rejects crass materialism.

“We must reject a mindset that places the pursuit of material gain and narrow self-interest above all else.”