

31 OCT 2003

Melaka-Abdullah

ALI RUSTAM CONGRATULATES ABDULLAH, THANKS DR M FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

ALOR GAJAH, Oct 31 (Bernama) -- The Melaka Government and the people congratulated Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi on his appointment as Malaysia's fifth Prime Minister today, succeeding Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said he hoped Abdullah would provide the continuity in the excellent leadership proven by Dr Mahathir in his 22-year rein as Prime Minister.

"The people of Melaka and I are grateful to Dr Mahathir and will continue to support Datuk Seri Abdullah just like how we rallied behind Dr Mahathir," he told reporters after a meet-the-people session at the Melekek state constituency in Simpang Ampat, here.

Abdullah, 64, was sworn in as Prime Minister before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong, Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin Syed Putra Jamalullail, at Istana Negara this afternoon.

Abdullah, who was Deputy Prime Minister, succeeds Dr Mahathir, who retired after assuming the Prime Minister's post on July 16, 1981.

Mohd Ali also conveyed the state government's highest appreciation to Dr Mahathir for his immense contributions and sacrifices to the country and people.

"Only the Almighty God can reward Dr Mahathir for his good deeds to this beloved nation.

"Although he is no longer the Prime Minister, the Melaka Government and the people will always welcome his visit to the state," he said.

As a mark of appreciation to Dr Mahathir's contributions, Mohd Ali, who is also Melaka Barisan Nasional (BN) Chairman, said the State BN would work hard in the coming general election to deliver a resounding victory to the coalition.

"Members of BN component parties will work hard to wrest opposition-held seats in the state, particularly the Kota Melaka parliamentary constituency, which has been held by the DAP for 30 years," he added.

-- BERNAMA

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