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Chinese dailies discuss recent Umno developments

By Ramlan Said; Lim Chee Wei

THE editorials in major Chinese dailies yesterday zeroed in on recent developments in Umno which signalled the arrival of the Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi era.

Sin Chew Daily said the support given to the Prime Minister were clear indications that the Abdullah era in Umno had begun.

Umno's divisional elections have also brought changes, with new and young faces in the leadership that could attract more middle class people, the daily opined.

Umno was facing a new form of society that necessitated the party to review its approach, said the daily, but the bigger issue was the need for strategies to accommodate a rapidly evolving and modern society exposed to information technology.

"Besides the need to have an efficient Government, Umno, under Abdullah's leadership, must also subscribe to an approach that emphasises on efficiency, systematic organisation and modernisation - qualities aspired by the new middle class."

The editorial in Nanyang Siang Pau commented on Abdullah's victory.

It also touched on the party's quota system on nominations, saying although it was justified to ensure stability, the system could be refined to further enhance democracy in Umno.

Nanyang also attributed the smooth leadership transition in Umno to the visionary approach by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad. By delaying the party elections until after the 2004 general election, Dr Mahathir had given Abdullah ample time to consolidate his position and unite members.

Elsewhere, the dailies gave prominence to the brutal murder of MCA Youth leader Mah An An. In a front page story in Oriental Daily News yesterday, MCA announced its resolve to combat rising crime with the setting up an anti-crime action committee headed by Deputy Home Affairs Minister Datuk Tan Chai Ho. Party president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting was quoted as urging the Government to continue the anti-crime campaign.

A comment in Sin Chew expressed hope that Mah's senseless death would instill greater awareness among the public on the need to fight crime.

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