

01/11/2003

Pride and joy overwhelm Khailan

Aida Ahmad

KEPALA BATAS, Fri. - Datuk Seri Khailan Hassan held back tears of pride and joy as she watched her eldest son, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, being sworn in as country's fifth Prime Minister during a live telecast at her home in Jalan Perak today.

"It is just so overwhelming. I don't know how to express my happiness except to say that I never thought he would become Prime Minister one day.

"More importantly, I thank Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad for entrusting my son with the responsibility to lead the nation."

Khailan, 78, watched the telecast from Istana Negara with her daughter-in-law Khairun Bilal, 40, who is the wife of Abdullah's youngest brother, Mohd Tahir, and Khairun's older brother Md Kamal Bilal, 41.

Also watching the historic moment with Khailan were Kepala Batas Umno division secretary Datuk Abu Bakar Yahaya and three of the division's Wanita Umno committee members.

Asked how she felt as she watched Abdullah being sworn in, Khailan said: "Alhamdulillah ... I thank God for his blessings. I know my son will carry out his duties well."

She said she looked forward to Abdullah's home-coming tomorrow.

"I am sure it will be overwhelming for him since thousands of Kepala Batas residents will be there to welcome him," she added.

Khailan said when Abdullah was a boy in school, many of his friends had told him that he would some day grow up to be an influential person in the country.

"Even one of his cousins told him that he would be a 'somebody' in the future," she said.

Asked if she had any advice for Abdullah, she said: "Jangan bangga ... Ingatlah orang kat bawah tu (don't be a proud person, remember those under you).

"Jaga negara baik-baik (take care of the country well)."

Md Kamal said he wished Abdullah all the best as the nation's Prime Minister.

"He has been through thick and thin and I am so proud of who he is now," Md Kamal said.