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The stuff Pak Lah is made of

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NOW all eyes are focused on Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Needless to say, there will be countless "experts", from captains of industry to mamak-stall patrons, who will have advice on just about anything for the new premier.

All sorts of views will be ex-changed in earnest, each supposedly being the most essential thing Pak Lah must do to form an effective government.

Views will range from how the civil service should be reformed to reforming Umno at all levels to rid age-old problems of money politics and jostling for power.

There will be talk of improvements to the education system and there will be opinions on how the Government should change the way it awards projects.

There will be opinions on how to do everything.

Some of these views will have merit. Indeed, new leadership of any government, especially one which has been heralded in with full blessings of the public at large, has in its favour a golden opportunity to institute some bold changes.

The overwhelming goodwill that envelops the new leadership will cushion the discomfort that comes from any changes that take place, and so it is understandable that many would feel that Pak Lah should grab the opportunity.

Furthermore, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad has left his successor a country that is intrinsically strong and stable, that would be able to withstand some adjustments.

Of course, most of these opinions may just be nothing more than coffee-shop talk, although some might actually reach the new PM. Fortunately, it should be easy enough for Pak Lah to sift through the information to take what is useful and discard the rest.

As Malaysians, we must not be too quick to judge, nor must we expect too much too soon. We are still technically undergoing a transition period.

At every level, Malaysians are continuing to make adjustments, for it is quite something to experience a leadership change after more than two decades.

Pak Lah has considerable experience as a leader and this will most certainly become obvious in the months and years ahead. We will soon get to see the stuff of which he is made of, the qualities that made Dr Mahathir pick him as his successor.

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