

Abdullah bids emotional farewell
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Abdullah Ahmad Badawi this afternoon officially handed over the duties of prime minister to Najib Abdul Razak at the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya.

The handing-over ceremony took place at the fifth floor of the Prime Minister's Office at 4.50pm.

Last day of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Najib Abdul Razak takes over as prime minister in Putrajaya. Najib had taken the oath of office as the country's sixth prime minister before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Mizan Zainal Abidin at the Istana Negara in Kuala Lumpur this morning.

The nation recorded history with the elevation of Najib to the post of prime minister when, for the first time, the post was filled by the son of a former prime minister. Najib's father, Tun Abdul Razak, was the country's second prime minister.

According to Bernama, at the handing-over ceremony, Abdullah, 70, attired in an orange baju Melayu, handed to Najib the prime minister's blue desk folder to signify the official handing over of duties and responsibilities.

Najib, 55, was dressed in a pink baju Melayu at the ceremony, which was witnessed by chief secretary to the government Mohd Sidek Hassan.

The ceremony marked the conclusion of the transition of power from Abdullah to Najib.

Emotions run high

After the handing-over ceremony, a calm and relaxed Abdullah and his wife shook hands with ministers, deputy ministers and senior government officers who were waiting at the lobby of the Prime Minister's Office.

They also shook hands with the staff at the Prime Minister's Office who had lined up from the main entrance of the building to Abdullah's car to see the couple off.

Last day of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Najib Abdul Razak takes over as prime minister in Putrajaya. Earlier, the grand imam of the Putra Mosque Manaf Mat read the "doa selamat" seeking God's grace for the continued good health of Abdullah, Jeanne and his family.

Some of those present were overcome with emotion and were sad and teary-eyed. With Najib and Rosmah accompanying the former PM and former First Lady to the car, Abdullah waved a final goodbye before leaving the premises at 5.25pm.

Abdullah was appointed deputy prime minister on Jan 8, 1999, and eventually became prime minister when he succeeded Mahathir who had resigned from the post.

Abdullah, who holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Islamic Studies from the University of Malaya, is a former civil servant and had held various posts including deputy secretary-general of the then culture, youth and sports ministry.

From youngest MP to PM

Najib, who was born in Kuala Lipis, Pahang, became the youngest member of Parliament at the age of 22 when he won the Pekan seat unopposed in 1976. The seat had fallen vacant following the death of his father.

Last day of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Najib Abdul Razak takes over as prime minister in Putrajaya. Najib, who holds a bachelor's degree (honours) in industrial economics from the University of Nottingham, England, started out as public relations manager of Petronas where he served from 1974 to 1976. Then he took over as chairperson of the Livestock Development Board, which he held until 1978.

He created history as the youngest deputy minister when he was appointed deputy minister of energy, telecommunications and post on July 27, 1978 at the age of 25.

In 1982, Najib again created history when he was appointed the menteri besar of Pahang at the age of 29. He held the post until 1986.

Last day of Abdullah Ahmad Badawi. Najib Abdul Razak takes over as prime minister in Putrajaya. Subsequently, he moved to the federal level where he was appointed culture, youth and sports minister (from May 1987 to October 1990), defence minister (October 1990 to April 1995), education minister (May 1995 to November 1999) and again as defence minister (December 1999 to September 2008).

When Najib was appointed deputy prime minister on Jan 7, 2004, he was the defence minister, a post he held until September 2008 when he was given the finance portfolio.

In politics, Najib had helmed Umno Youth from 1987 to 1993 and won one of the three posts of Umno vice-president in 1993 and retained the post up to 2004 when he was elected deputy president.

Najib has five children, three boys and two girls.

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