

A warm welcome for Abdullah

KUALA TERENGGANU: More than 1,000 people withstood first the blistering heat and then braved a sudden downpour to welcome Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi at the Sultan Mahmud Airport yesterday.

Abdullah was greeted with loud shouts of *Hidup Pak Lah, Kami Sokong Pak Lah* and *Kami Sayang Pah Lah* (Long live Pak Lah. We support Pak Lah and We love Pak Lah) from mostly-Umno delegates, who were attending the state Umno convention yesterday.

At the convention venue, Abdullah gamely took a trishaw ride with Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh to the convention hall in the heavy rain.

The arrival of the partly-drenched duo was again met by shouts of support for the Prime Minister.

Abdullah had flown here to close the two-day convention in his capacity as Umno president.

In his short speech at the airport, he thanked the crowd for their confidence in him, adding that he would never forget the support of Umno members who helped the Barisan Nasional wrest Terengganu from Pas in the last general-election.

"The time has come for the Government to make developing the nation a *jihad* (holy war).

"It is our mission towards realising Vision 2020," he said.