

# Leaders stand up for PM

**KUALA LUMPUR:** More key Barisan Nasional leaders joined the chorus of support for Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi following the criticism of his leadership by his predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

Deputy MCA president Datuk Seri Chan Kong Choy said Abdullah had been working hard to take Malaysia to greater heights.

He said decisions affecting national policies and projects were made collectively in the Cabinet and it was not the sole decision of anyone.

"These decisions were taken after careful consideration.

Decisions taken were in the interest of Malaysia," the Transport Minister said.

MIC president Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu said the party would continue to support Abdullah's leadership.

The people should give the Prime Minister the opportunity to do his work and enable him to achieve the country's goals.

The Works Minister also said he was sad over the strained ties between the present and former premiers.

Umno secretary-general Datuk Seri Radzi Sheikh Ahmad rebutted the accusation that Abdullah had dismantled many of his predecessor's policies and

projects.

In fact, he said, Abdullah had presented a comprehensive 9th Malaysia Plan to achieve Dr Mahathir's Vision 2020.

Expressing shock and surprise at the turn of events, Radzi said Abdullah should be given a chance to manage the country.

Umno information chief Tan Sri Muhammad Muhammad Taib said Abdullah's policies and decisions were based on the people's expectations for a more transparent and open government.

"The Prime Minister has discharged his duties with excellence after receiving the biggest

mandate ever in the last general election," he said.

"There is no question of him stabbing past leaders in the back because whatever he has done so far was meant to protect the country's interest."

Agriculture and Agro-based Industry Minister Tan Sri Muhyiddin Mohd Yassin said Dr Mahathir's criticism undermined the credibility and integrity of Abdullah and the Government.

Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin said Dr Mahathir might have been influenced by certain people who told him that he no longer enjoyed the support of Umno.

Zainuddin said he told Datuk Mukhriz (Dr Mahathir's son) that this was untrue.

"As a close friend (of Dr Mahathir), I cannot deny that there are people who may have influenced his perception."

Terengganu Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh said there should not be any bickering between the past and present leaders as they were part of the same party which formed the Government.

"While we appreciate and value the contributions of past leaders, there can only be one leader at any one time," he said.

Kedah Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Mahdzir Khalid said every

leader had his own style of work, so Abdullah should be allowed to make his own decisions.

Malacca Chief Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam said even after Abdullah was chosen as the new president and had taken over as Prime Minister, he always reminded everyone about the success that Dr Mahathir had achieved.

Selangor Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Dr Mohd Khir said: "As government officers, we must support the Prime Minister. Each leader has his own vision, such as Islam Hadhari, and we must strive to achieve the vision for the good of the people."