

PM pays tribute to past statesmen

KUALA TERENGGANU: Malaysia has become a developed, prosperous and dynamic country because of the ideas, good leadership and determined efforts of past statesmen, including Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad, said Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

The Prime Minister said the success achieved began from the leadership of the first premier, the late Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra Al-Haj, and was continued by the late Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, the late Tun Hussein Onn and Dr Mahathir.

"These leaders are national heroes and we are indebted to them for what they have done," he said in his speech for the launch of the national-level Merdeka Month and Fly the *Jalur Gemilang* Campaign at Dataran Shah Bandar here last night.

Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Datuk Seri Dr Rais Yatim read out the speech in his capacity as chairman of the 49th Merdeka celebration national committee.

Present at the ceremony were Terengganu Mentri Besar Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, Housing and Local Government Minister Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting and Works Minister Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu. - Bernama