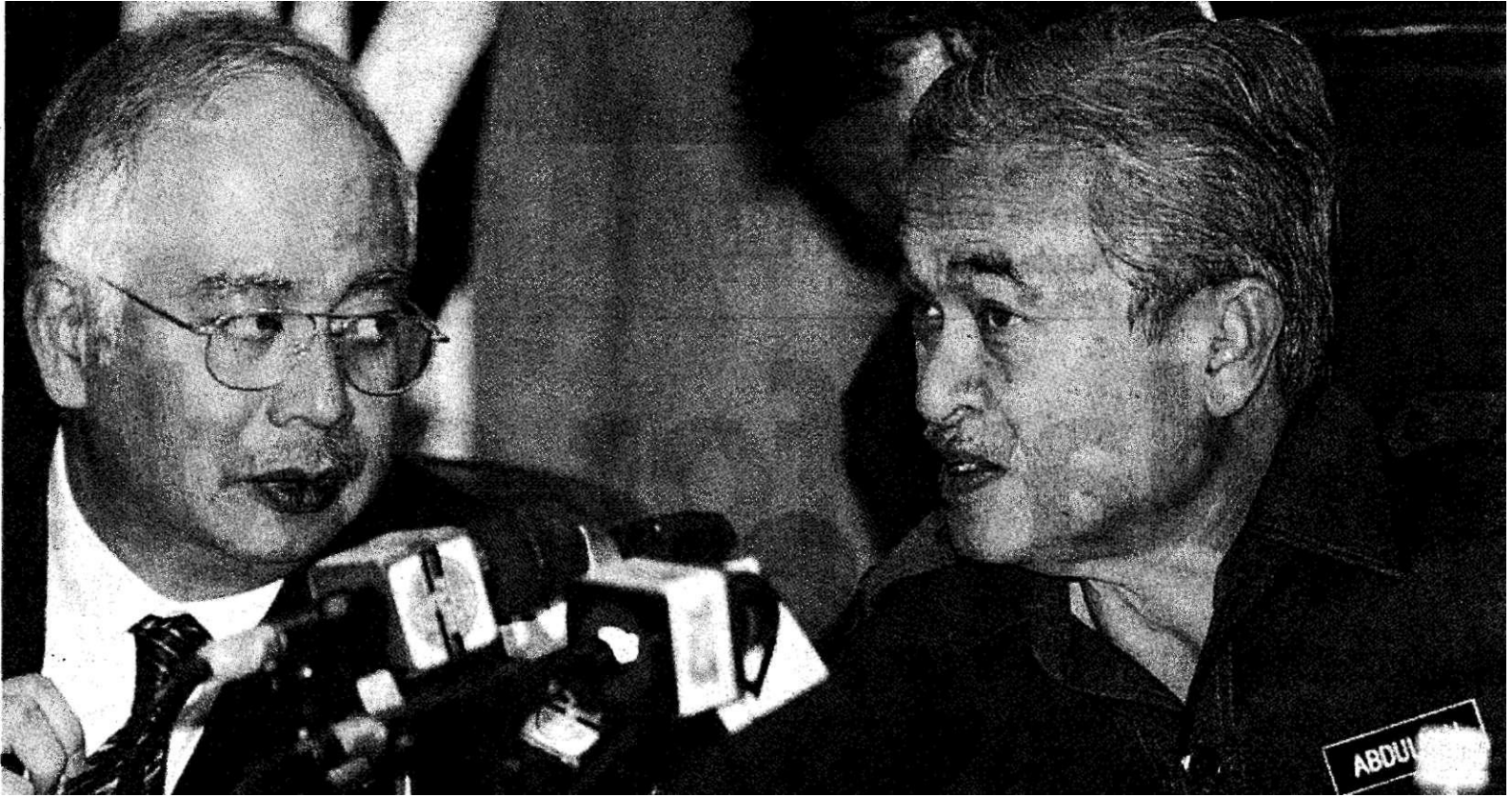


'Not for mega projects'

PM: Extra RM10bil will be used to help the people



FIELDING QUESTIONS: Abdullah addressing the media during the press conference after the Umno supreme council meeting at Putra World Trade Centre in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. At left is Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak. - STARpic By ZABIDI TUSIN

BY LEONG SHEN-LI

KUALA LUMPUR: The additional RM10bil allocated for the 8th Malaysia Plan will not be used to fund any mega projects, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

Abdullah, who is also Finance Minister, said the additional allocation approved by the Government would be used for programmes that would help bring benefit to the people.

"The programmes which will be given priority are those that will help

the people boost their economic level as well as solve their social problems," he told reporters after the Umno supreme council meeting here yesterday.

Other programmes to be given priority included those that were promised during the recent general election, said Abdullah, who is the acting Umno president.

On criticisms by the opposition that the Government did not have a right to raise the allocation without going through Parliament, Abdullah said the announcement to raise the spending

allocation did not mean that Parliament was being by-passed.

He added that the money would be disbursed accordingly, irrespective of whether the projects were big or small.

Abdullah also said the Cabinet approved a list of priority government programmes for implementation which was presented to the Cabinet on Wednesday.

"We took into consideration complaints from the public that there were not enough projects for contractors to take," he said.

On Umno, he said the supreme council would not name any preferred candidate for the three vice-president posts but hopes that delegates will choose credible candidates.

"We will not do this because if we make a decision, we will be accused of not being democratic," he said, commenting on a suggestion by Cheras Umno division chief Datuk Syed Ali Alhabshiee.

He said the supreme council also decided that all state liaison committees would solve any problem that crops up during the branch elections.