

PM: Umno to honour pact

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Power sharing means party will not take Penang CM's post

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IPOH: Umno cannot have the Penang Chief Minister's post because it must honour the agreement that had been made, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

Citing the situation as part of the Barisan Nasional power-sharing concept which must be preserved to bring about national unity, Abdullah said: "No. We have *pakat* (reached an agreement). We must respect the contract.

"Umno cannot take the post of the Penang CM. Period. That is the social contract," he said when stressing that power sharing was one of three crucial points the Prime Minister seeks to uphold.

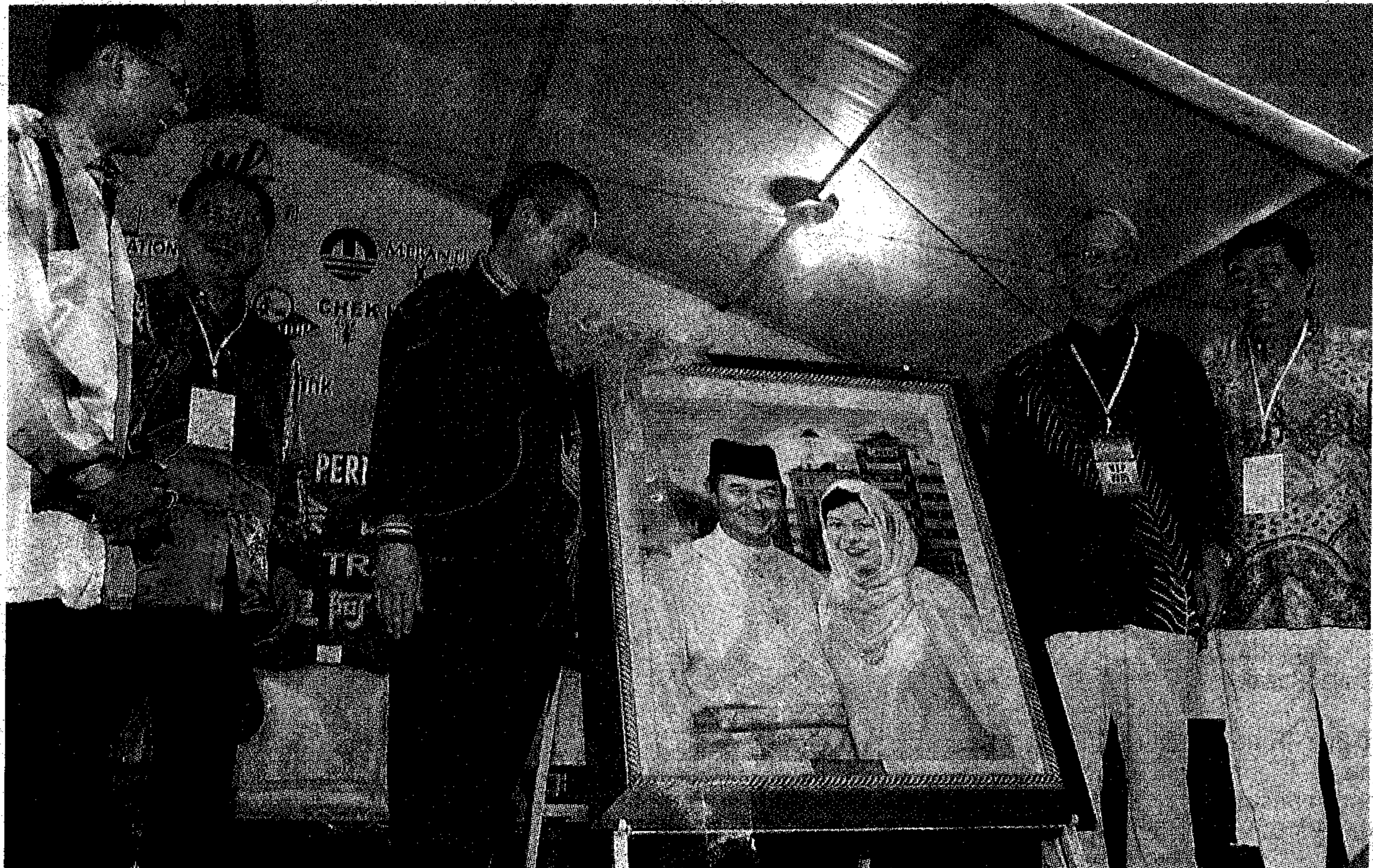
Abdullah noted that a genuine leader was one who knew how to honour a contract.

"If we know this (the power sharing), we will do well for the country," he said here yesterday after opening the Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry's trade exposition in conjunction with its centennial anniversary.

This is the first time Abdullah has come out to say that Umno cannot have the Penang Chief Minister's post.

"Everyone is looking after the interests of the parties they represent but the Government must be moderate. I must preserve this power sharing and there must be co-operation among the component members," said Abdullah.

He said the economic figures of the country such as higher reserves and a favourable trade balance



A lovely gift: Abdullah admiring the painting of himself and Jeanne presented by Perak Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Datuk Lim Kok Cheong (second from right) as Perak Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Tajol Rosli Ghazali (left), Associated Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry of Malaysia president Tan Sri William Cheng (second from left) and Tun Ling Liong Sik look on.

showed that the Government had done well, adding jokingly: "Your PM is not sleeping."

He also announced that a plan to develop the eastern corridor of Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu was almost ready.

"Malaysia is not just Klang Valley. We want other parts of the country to do well too."

Citing southern Johor, he said that

if the people thought of Singapore as Hong Kong, then Johor must be thought of as Shenzhen.

Meanwhile, wives of Perak dignitaries welcomed Datin Seri Jeanne Abdullah, the Prime Minister's wife, warmly into their fold.

Arriving at the official residence of Menteri Besar Datuk Seri Mohamad Tajol Rosli Ghazali at 10am for a visit yesterday, Jeanne was all smiles as

she shook hands with more than 1,000 women who clamoured to meet her.

The group, led by Tajol Rosli's wife Datin Seri Kamariah Mokri, held a gathering to greet Jeanne, which was attended by members from the Perak State Assemblymen's Wives Association (Baiduri), Puspanita and the Wanita wings of Barisan Nasional component members.