

# 'Malays giving up too fast'

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi urged the Malays to be as competitive in business as they were in politics.

The prime minister told the Economic Jihad Congress organised by the Confederation of Malay Economic Associations that the Malays lacked the desire to compete economically among themselves or with others, in contrast to politics, where they could go as far as commit slander.

"I feel ashamed when I hear such talk. I am not belittling my race. But I don't think this should be the way. They (the businessmen) are giving up without making an effort."

The poor record, however, did not mean the Malays were incapable of prospering in business, as attested by the examples of Malay entrepreneurs succeeding in ventures overseas.

"They not only succeed once but the quality of their work is good enough for them to get new con-



**Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi being greeted at the Economic Jihad Congress organised by the Confederation of Malay Economic Associations yesterday.**

tracts in the host countries.

"Failure is a tragedy with a severe lesson. We should learn from our mistakes and not be discouraged to try again."

The congress aims to revive the spirit of entrepreneurship among the Malays. Abdullah said it was a religious duty for every Muslim to do well in the economy.

Touching on the Employees'

Provident Fund (EPF) buying a majority stake in Rashid Hussain Bhd, the prime minister said the pension fund and its board would not have made the acquisition without thorough consideration.

He said he was confident the EPF would appoint professionals to run the bank.

"I would be surprised if they did not do so. They will definitely get

the best professionals to do the job," he said when asked on the wisdom of the takeover as the EPF did not have the expertise to manage a bank.

On Anti-Corruption Agency director-general Datuk Zulkipli Mat Noor's term in office, which is due to end this month, Abdullah said he would make a decision when the time came.