

Abdullah extols power of prayer

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KUALA LUMPUR: Prayer has long been hailed as food for the soul, contributing towards an individual's spiritual well-being.

Now, university research has found that the postures adopted when performing the *solat* or Muslim prayer, have some physical benefits as well. Initial results of the study have shown beneficial effects on the heart and spine, as well as an increase in the capacity for memory and attention.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi was especially interested in the ongoing research project conducted by Universiti Malaya's Biomedical Engineering Department.

He said the study affirmed the power of prayer in a person's life.

"The study investigates the physiological interactions and effects of the *solat* postures on the human body.

"Since the majority of our population are Muslims, it is both of interest and importance that we not only understand the spiritual benefits of *solat*, but also have a good understanding of its biologi-

cal and medical effects," he said, in his opening speech at the Third Kuala Lumpur International Conference on Biomedical Engineering yesterday.

Likening the postures of *solat* to

those in yoga, Abdullah said practitioners of both would see the similarities and benefits. He hoped the findings of the study would inspire novel applications in other research projects.