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# You are heroes, Abdullah tells two angkasawan

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Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi welcoming Dr Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor and Maj Dr Faiz Khaleed (left) at his office yesterday.

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PUTRAJAYA: "You are heroes," were Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's words of welcome to spacemen Dr Sheikh Muszaphar Shukor and Maj Dr Faiz Khaleed.

Dr Muszaphar and Dr Faiz visited Abdullah yesterday at the prime minister's office to "report" to him after arriving home in Malaysia a few days ago.

Abdullah was briefed on Dr Muszaphar's mission to the International Space Station (ISS) and on the scientific experiments he conducted there.

"I'm glad to hear the specimens were all safe as they had quite a rough landing on Earth in the Soyuz craft," Abdullah said after the meeting.

He said Dr Muszaphar had done the nation proud and had achieved a big step for Malaysia by excelling in other fields.

Abdullah reiterated that Malaysia was keen on continuing the space programme and would consider future offers to send another astronaut into space.

"Dr Faiz is just as capable and he will be involved in the next mission.

"There could also be room for Dr Muszaphar to be involved again."

The two spacemen presented Abdullah with "souvenirs" from space: the mini Quran which Dr Muszaphar took with him to the ISS, a frame containing other objects which he also brought, such as a mini Jalur Gemilang and a copy of the Rukunegara, and a black leather jacket with the Angkasawan logo and Abdullah's name stitched on it.

"You are a hero," Abdullah said while shaking Dr Muszaphar's hand.

"You are a hero, too," he said as he shook Dr Faiz's hand.

The astronauts are to meet Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak today at his office at the Defence Ministry.

Dr Faiz is just as capable and he will be involved in the next mission. There could also be room for Dr Muszaphar to be involved again.

Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi  
Prime Minister