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I'm not quitting, says Pak Lah

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'I will continue efforts to strengthen Umno and Barisan Nasional'

By **RAPHAEL WONG**
newsdesk@thestar.com.my

PUTRAJAYA: Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said he will not resign and will continue Barisan Nasional's struggle.

He said that even though Barisan did not obtain a two-thirds parliamentary majority, the coalition did not lose and as its head, he would seek the Yang di-Pertuan Agong's consent to be sworn in as Prime Minister.

"I give you my word, ladies and gentlemen, that I will continue my efforts to strengthen Umno and Barisan Nasional, to launch the mani-



festos that we have promised so that our country will be safe, peaceful and prosperous (*selamat, aman dan makmur*)," he said.

He was addressing several hundred supporters who had gathered at Seri Perdana, the Prime Minister's official residence, here yesterday.

Abdullah said it was the presence of his supporters on Saturday night and yesterday that gave him the strength and enthusiasm to continue the struggle.

"We want to continue our struggle as our agenda is not over yet. We want our country to be progressive and successful and for the people to be happy," he said.

He said the heartfelt support given to him was overwhelming.

"To you all, I say thank you. I will

not disappoint you," he said.

Abdullah hoped that his supporters remain strong and enthusiastic and continue to support Barisan.

He said he wanted them to be the party's strength so they could be united and prevail in all struggles.

Abdullah dismissed rumours that he was stepping down.

"Why should I step down? Our party has won. I do not fear anyone except Allah," he said.

He said he had strength and enthusiasm and would be stronger with the support of members.

"Come, let us work together to be a force to be reckoned with, to con-

tinue with the struggle," he said.

Meanwhile, various Umno and Barisan leaders visited Abdullah throughout the day to express their support.

They included vice-presidents Tan Sri Muhyiddin Yassin and Datuk Seri Mohd Ali Rustam, Wanita Umno chief Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, her deputy Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, Puteri chief Datuk Noraini Ahmad, and supreme council member Datuk Seri Khaled Nordin, information chief Muhammad Muhammad Taib; and Second Finance Minister Tan Sri Mohamed Nor Yakcop and MIC president S. Samy Vellu.