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Pak Lah: Najib has done well

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TOWARDS 2020:

Abdullah believes PM will continue to do his best for Malaysia

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PRIME Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak has carried out many transformation programmes for the country and this has placed Malaysia on the international stage.

Former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi yesterday said his successor had done well as the nation's leader and his transformation plans had propelled Malaysia forward.

This, he said, included the objective for Malaysia to achieve developed and high-income nation status by 2020, as well as having a modern and efficient administration system.

His transformation plans have shown results. For example, the extreme poverty level has been reduced and stands at 0.6 per cent, while the gross domestic product (GDP) has seen an increase despite facing a challenging global economic situation.

Praising the work that Najib had carried out, Abdullah said the policies and programmes that were introduced made Malaysia one of the important countries in the Asia Pacific.

He reminded Najib that while Malaysia was progressing towards Vision 2020, it was also important for him to determine the future of Malaysia after achieving that objective to strengthen the country's position in the international arena.

"The journey has yet to end. It is



Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak and his predecessor, Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, at the launch of the coffee-table book, 'Najib Razak the Statesman: Four Decades of Riding the Currents of Leadership and Politics (1976-Present)', in Kuala Lumpur yesterday. Pic by Ghazali Kori

vital for Najib to think about what the country's objectives or goals will be after 2020 and how Malaysia will be 100 years after its formation.

"This is important and Najib will have a chance to carve the nation's future," he said at the launch of a coffee-table book marking the prime minister's 40 years in politics.

Believing that Najib would ensure Malaysia remained as a diverse country with a strong identity, Abdullah said he hoped the country would continue to progress under Najib's leadership and become a nation that was respected for its economy and skilled human resources.

He said he believed Najib would continue to do his best for the nation

and its people.

Then, turning to his successor, Abdullah said: "Stay true to the principles of your father (Tun Abdul Razak Hussein). You have done well for Malaysia. But, always remember that the most important thing a leader leaves behind is character."

He reminded Najib that while political stability and economic success were important, it was vital to have character, especially integrity, honesty and empathy.

"That is how I remember your father and how I want you to be remembered. Take this as an advice from an old man. Be a leader that is loved and respected. Not one that is feared and obeyed."

"I pray to Allah that you will be guided to the right path for the future of our beloved country."

Later, Abdullah launched the coffee-table book on Najib, who was accompanied by his wife, Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor.

The book was published by the Foundation of Research on Transformation and was written by Professor Datuk Seri Dr Khairil Anas Jusoh and Dr Sabri Mohamad Sharif.

Titled *Najib Razak the Statesman: Four Decades of Riding the Currents of Leadership and Politics (1976-Present)*, the book contains articles on the prime minister's political career and transformation programmes over the past 40 years.

Najib entered politics on Feb 21, 1976, when he won the Pekan parliamentary seat in a by-election following the death of his father.

After the launch of the book, Najib reminisced about his political journey by reciting a poem titled "Coretan Empat Dekad (1976-Kini)" (See Page 4). The poem told the story of his foray into politics as well as the good and bad times he had faced as a politician and as the leader of the nation.

In the poem, Najib said he would remain committed to Umno's struggles while elevating the country's status and economy as it was his responsibility as prime minister to care for Malaysia and its people.