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'Integrity needed for prosperity'

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IMPORTANT: It can make or break a country, says Sultan Nazrin

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SULTAN of Perak Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah has stressed on the importance of integrity for a prosperous and peaceful Malaysia — a country of stronger and better people.

Speaking before the launch of former prime minister Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi's authorised biography, Sultan Nazrin alluded to numerous instances of integrity and lack thereof in today's world, which he said could make or break a country and its people.

"People everywhere, I believe, want the same thing, whether they are citizens of a developed Western state, whether they are in an emerging economy, or whether they are in a strife-torn third-world backwater, they all want a leadership with in-



Sultan of Perak **Sultan Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah** receiving the biographical book 'Being Abdullah Ahmad Badawi' from former prime minister **Tun Abdullah Ahmad Badawi** at the **Sime Darby Convention Centre in Kuala Lumpur** yesterday. With them are Deputy Prime Minister **Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi** and the book's author, **Datuk Wong Sulong**. Bernama pic

tegrity that will improve their lives and make their tomorrows better than their yesterdays."

He drew parallels from the ongoing United States presidential election, which had opened the eyes of the world to the kind of leadership the country wanted.

"In all three widely-watched presidential debates, the question of integrity, honesty and moral courage was raised by both candidates. If we put aside the insults and backbiting, what do we have?"

"What we have is that for 240 years, Americans have always gone

to the polls, choosing a president whom they believed had more integrity, honesty and moral courage than his opponent," he said.

Abdullah, he continued, received resounding support during his tenure, as the people of Malaysia wanted and continue to want, a leader with the mentioned characteristics, more so integrity.

"In modern society, where cynicism abounds, the most difficult thing, we will find as we read this book, is how Abdullah sought to instill integrity within the system and how he tried to navigate the minefields, while dealing with little Napoleons within the civil service, and enforcement agencies and meeting resistance to change within the ranks in his own party.

"Abdullah's dilemma is not peculiar only to political leadership. The same cynicism exists at all levels, whether is it about the monarchy, a sports organisation or a business empire, and it happens more frequently than we would like to admit," he said before launching the book.

Sultan Nazrin said the root cause of why a community or nation succeeded or failed, always came down to one issue, that is integrity or the

lack of it.

"A nation's survival, and its success, therefore, depends on integrity on all levels and most crucially, on its leadership and that is what Tun Abdullah sought to achieve when he came into office.

The biography, entitled *Being Abdullah Ahmad Badawi — The Authorised Biography*, was penned by journalist and author Datuk Wong Sulong and traces the evolving public perception of Abdullah and his humble and remarkable journey in life and politics.

The launch was attended by a veritable crowd that included Permaisuri of Perak Tuanku Zara Salim, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Ahmad Zahid Hamidi, Abdullah's wife, Tun Jeanne Abdullah, Youth and Sports Minister Khairy Jamaluddin, former deputy prime minister Tun Musa Hitam, Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Idris Jusoh, Domestic Trade, Cooperatives and Consumerism Minister Datuk Seri Hamzah Zainudin, Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Tan Sri Joseph Kurup, Deputy Defence Minister Datuk Seri Mohd Johari Baharum, and Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Reeza Merican Naina Merican.