

Cabinet pays tribute to Dr M

NST 30/10/2003 - 1 PRECISE

WHAT THEY SAY

He wants us to continue to work for the nation.



— Datuk Seri Najib Razak on Dr Mahathir's advice to ministers



Dr Mahathir has chaired more than 800 Cabinet meetings...it is very hard

for us to accept the fact that he's leaving.

— Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting

The country has prospered by leaps and bounds under his (Dr Mahathir's) leadership.



— Datuk Seri S. Samy Vellu



Dr Mahathir has made great contributions to the country

throughout his 22 years as Prime Minister. It is not easy to bid farewell to him.

— Datuk Seri Dr Lim Keng Yaik

I will miss him as a father, leader and role model whom I look up to for inspiration.



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EVERYTHING'S IN ORDER: A satisfied Dr Mahathir handing over a file to a confident Abdullah at the end of the weekly Cabinet meeting in Putrajaya yesterday. The meeting was Dr Mahathir's last before he steps down as Prime Minister tomorrow. — NST picture by Hadzme Mohd Jaafar

PRECISE

■ By Firdaus Abdullah

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PUTRAJAYA, Wed. — The Cabinet today paid tribute to Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad for his invaluable service to the nation as Prime Minister for the last 22 years.

Led by Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Cabinet members expressed gratitude to Dr Mahathir for his guidance, achievements and vision which have successfully transformed Malaysia into a force to be reckoned with.

Abdullah assured Dr Mahathir that his vision and objectives, which had been set out through the various policies, would be continued.

Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Razak said Dr Mahathir thanked the

Abdullah: PM's vision will be continued

ministers for their co-operation during his tenure as Prime Minister and urged them to extend the same to his successor.

He said Dr Mahathir was thankful that he received the utmost support from his Cabinet, adding that the Cabinet had worked well as a unit.

"The Prime Minister hopes that it will be the same when Datuk Seri Abdullah takes over.

"He wants us to continue to work for the nation," Najib said, adding that Dr Mahathir emphasised that he had enjoyed chairing all the 883 Cabinet meetings since becoming Prime Minister in 1981.

Youth and Sports Minister Datuk Hishammuddin Hussein said the ministers agreed to continue with the policies and plans Dr Mahathir had put in place.

Holding back tears, Hishammuddin, who is also Umno Youth leader, said Dr Mahathir once again showed his impeccable confidence and strength by chairing his last Cabinet meeting in the usual manner, without showing any emotions.

"As a young leader, I learnt a lot from him, you cannot mix emotions with the responsibility of governing...this was the last Cabinet meeting (for Dr Mahathir), but it was busi-

ness as usual," he said.

The Cabinet meeting today began with a group photography session at the Prime Minister's Department, and continued until about 12.30pm.

When the meeting was adjourned, reporters were allowed into the Cabinet meeting room for the first time to capture the last moments of Dr Mahathir as a Cabinet member and chairman.

Dr Mahathir then signed the minutes of the meeting for the last time and thanked each and every one of the Cabinet members for their