



**PASSING THE BATON:** Dr Mahathir congratulating Abdullah after the Umno supreme council meeting at party headquarters yesterday. Abdullah would become Umno acting president after he takes over the premiership from Dr Mahathir. Standing left is party vice president and Defence Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak.

# Formalities begin at Istana Negara

**NST 31/10/2003 - 2 PRECISE**

**KUALA LUMPUR, Thurs.** — The appointment of the country's fifth Prime Minister will take place at Istana Negara tomorrow with Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi taking his oath and signing the instrument of office before the Yang di-Pertuan Agong Tuanku Syed Sirajuddin.

Dignitaries, guests and family members of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and Abdullah are expected to gather at

the throne room beginning 2.30pm.

The historic event, to be telecast live by RTM and TV3, will also be witnessed by Cabinet Ministers, Menteri Besar, Dewan Negara President and Dewan Rakyat Speaker, the Chief Justice, the Attorney-General, the Armed Forces Chief, the Inspector-General of Police, the Chief Secretary to the Government, secretaries-general and heads of department.

Dr Mahathir and Abdullah will arrive separately after performing their Friday prayers in Putrajaya and are expected to enter the throne room together at 3pm.

The Yang di-Pertuan Agong will then enter to witness Abdullah taking his oath and signing the instrument of office.

After a *do'a selamat*, there will be a photography session before Abdullah and Dr Mahathir return separately to the Prime Minister's Department in Putrajaya.

Dr Mahathir is expected to arrive at the Prime Minister's office on the fifth floor at 4.10pm followed by Abdullah five minutes later.

They are expected to have a private session together after which Dr Mahathir will clock out at 4.45pm using the punch card system introduced by him for civil servants a month after he became Prime Minister in 1981.

Dr Mahathir and Abdullah will then proceed to Laman Perdana, where their wives will be present, to meet all the secretaries-general, heads of department and staff of the Ministry of Finance and Prime Minister's Department.

After that, Dr Mahathir will return to his official residence, Seri Perdana. Abdullah is expected to occupy his office at the Prime Minister's Department on Monday.

The live telecast by TV3 will be hosted by the station's News and Current Affairs general manager Datuk Chamil Wariya.