

Desk file to signify transfer of power

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SYMBOLIC: Dr Mahathir presenting the desk file to Abdullah at the Prime Minister's Office in Putrajaya yesterday. — Bernamapic

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panied by Abdullah and Endon, followed by Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah.

Throughout the ceremonies, Dr Mahathir was seen holding back his emotions and deep in thought most of the time.

Later, in Putrajaya, Dr Mahathir officially handed over the leadership of the Federal Government to Abdullah.

Bernama reported that the ceremony was held at the Prime Minister's Office on the fifth floor of Bangunan Perdana Putra, the seat of government.

Dr Mahathir handed over the desk file

to signify the transfer of responsibilities of the high office to Abdullah in the presence of the Chief Secretary to the Government.

Following this, Abdullah, who is also the acting Umno president, had a closed-door meeting with Dr Mahathir.

Outside, Cabinet ministers, senior government officers and scores of ministry staff and hundreds of Putrajaya residents waited to bid farewell to Dr Mahathir.

Abdullah, who was born on Nov 26, 1939 in Kepala Batas, Penang, was appointed Deputy Prime Minister by Dr

Mahathir on Jan 8, 1999, which was a Friday, like yesterday, and also in the month of Ramadan.

Dr Mahathir then walked over to the lobby where he clocked out at 5.06pm, witnessed by staff of the Prime Minister's Department.

Abdullah then walked with Dr Mahathir and Dr Siti Hasmah to their car.

Dr Mahathir spent about 20 minutes shaking hands with the officers and staff as he walked towards his car.

After seeing Dr Mahathir off, the new Prime Minister waved to the people present and then got into his official car.