

# Staying focused on 9th Plan

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**PUTRAJAYA:** The revamped Cabinet unveiled yesterday will focus on the successful implementation of the Ninth Malaysia Plan, which is critical for the nation's future, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said.

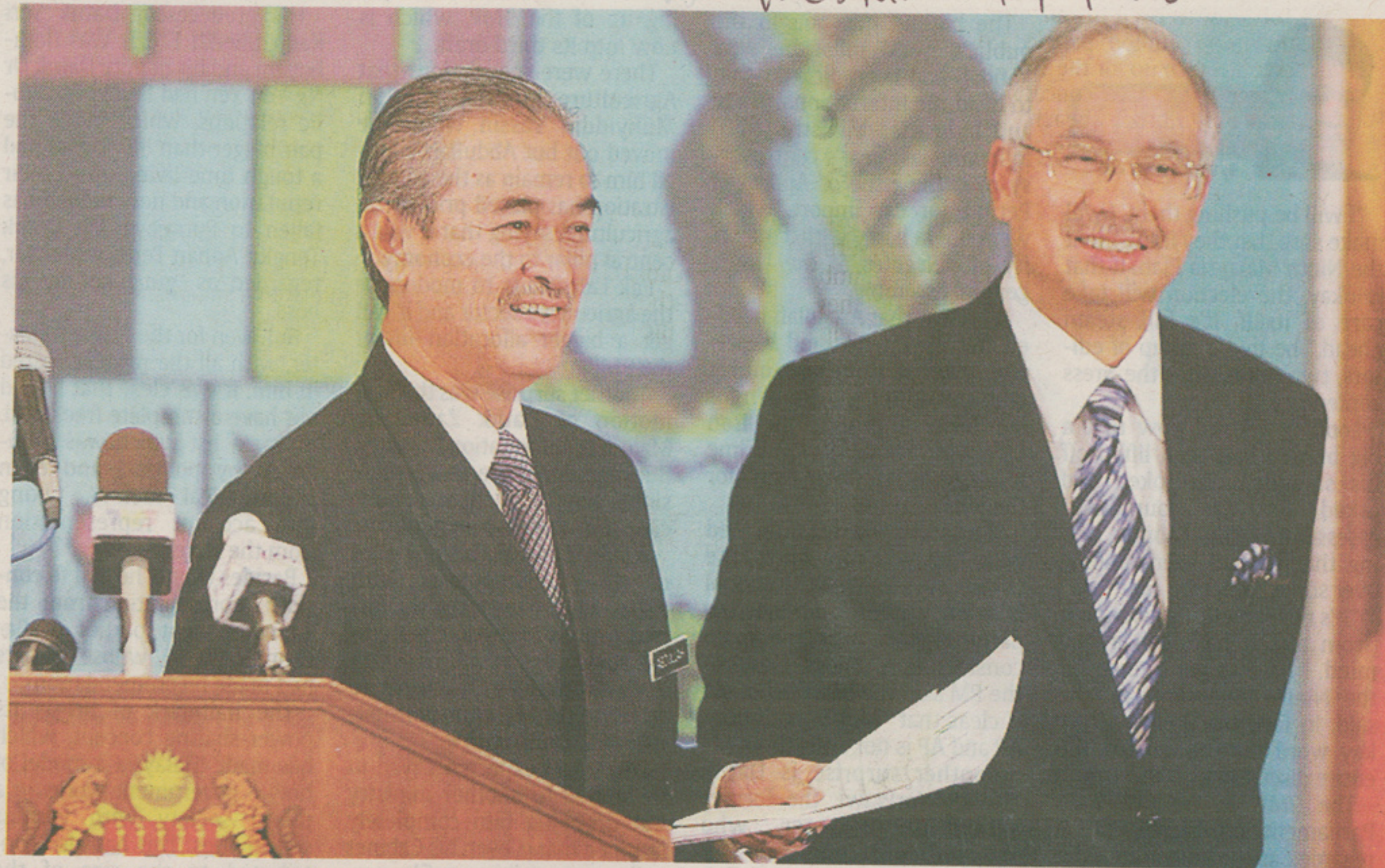
Although there were quite a few changes in the line-up, many were surprised that most senior ministers were retained in their respective key ministries.

In the reshuffle, the first since Abdullah took over as Prime Minister, two deputy ministers have been promoted to ministerial posts, three ministers changed portfolios and two former Cabinet members were re-appointed.

Higher Education Minister Datuk Seri Dr Shafie Salleh and Tourism Minister Datuk Dr Leo Michael Toyad have been dropped from the Cabinet.

Minister in the Prime Minister's Department Datuk Mustapa Mohamed is now Higher Education Minister while Datuk Tengku Adnan Tengku Mansor returned to the Cabinet as Tourism Minister.

Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz, who was embroiled in the Approved Permits (APs) issue last year,



**JOVIAL MOOD:** Abdullah and Najib leaving the press conference hall after the Prime Minister announced a Cabinet reshuffle in Putrajaya yesterday.

retained her International Trade and Industry Minister (Miti) post. The Prime Minister said her experience and skill in leading the ministry was still needed.

Rafidah, he said, had played an exemplary role and had been well-received by the international community.

"The only problem related to her was the Approved Permits

issue (but) the AP problem is not entirely related to Miti as Miti's role is much bigger than those relating to APs," he added.

The Prime Minister said sev-

eral ministers changed portfolios so that they have the opportunity to serve in other ministries.

"(Datuk Seri) Radzi (Sheikh Ahmad), for example, is in JPM

(the Prime Minister's Department) and he has legal qualifications. So, I think it will be good for him to head the Home Affairs Ministry.

"His responsibilities (in JPM) will be taken over by Datuk Seri Nazri Aziz."

Throughout the 15-minute press conference, Abdullah, flanked by his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, was in a jovial mood.

When photographers asked him to pose with his list containing the changes, Abdullah sportingly posed for them and held the list close to his chest, saying: "Here it is, ok, ok, ok!"

Deputy Information Minister Datuk Zainuddin Maidin has been made Information Minister, while Datuk Zulhasnan Rafique is now Federal Territories Minister.

Zainuddin, fondly known as Zam, replaced Datuk Seri Abdul Kadir Sheikh Fadzir who has resigned.

Zulhasnan fills the post (Federal Territories Minister) left vacant when Tan Sri Isa Samad stepped down after he was found guilty by Umno of money politics.

Datuk Effendi Norwawi who last served as agriculture minister made a comeback as Minister in the Prime Minister's Department.

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