

## PASSING OF A PATRIOT



# House pays tribute to Ghafar

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** Tun Abdul Ghafar Baba, the longest-serving elected representative the country has ever known, was given a rousing tribute on his home turf yesterday — the Dewan Rakyat.

A day after his death, a motion of condolence was tabled in the House by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, seconded by his deputy Datuk Seri Najib Razak and supported by many members, all of whom heaped

praise on a man who had been MP since the first federal legislative council elections in 1955.

Those who spoke included Opposition leader Lim Kit Siang and Pas Youth chief Salehuddin Ayob.

The motion was unanimously approved.

The Dewan Rakyat also observed a minute's silence when it began proceedings yesterday.

Abdullah said Malaysia had

lost a national hero who had contributed immensely to the nation's development.

"He was a mature leader, constantly voicing his concerns and views, especially on religious, racial and cultural issues."

For a Malay who came from a Malay village, he was broad-minded and could relate to anyone of all races and religions, Abdullah said.

Ghafar, 81, died of heart, lung and kidney complications

at the Gleneagles Intan Medical Centre in Jalan Ampang on Sunday.

Abdullah said Ghafar's loyalty was to his struggle for the people, and he had always been consistent in serving the country, whether holding a position in the Government or party, or as an ordinary member without a post.

He said Ghafar's qualities deserved emulation.

"The nation and the people have lost a statesman by the

name of Abdul Ghafar bin Baba, who served as a member of this honourable Dewan for many years.

"Tun Ghafar's contributions and his service will always be cherished in the nation's history."

The Dewan extends its highest appreciation to the late Tun Ghafar for his contributions, good deeds, service and devotion to the nation and the people," he said.

The Prime Minister said

the country and the people were also grateful to Ghafar's family for their sacrifices in allowing Ghafar to dedicate the greater part of his life to serving the nation and the people.

"On behalf of the Government and the people of Malaysia, I am extending my deepest condolences to the late Tun Ghafar's family."

"Our sadness and sympathies go out to his family members," he said.