

# MCA *The Star - 10/12/08* among parties backing Abdullah

**PETALING JAYA:** More parties have come forward to pledge their support for Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi following criticisms levelled against the Prime Minister by his predecessor Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting said the party central committee backed Abdullah's leadership and had unanimously endorsed the statement made by him (Ong) on Thursday expressing the MCA's support for Abdullah as Prime Minister and Barisan Nasional chairman.

He said Abdullah must be given undivided support to fulfil the promises pledged to the people as well as to bring development to the nation in realising Vision 2020.

"He has also introduced important agendas, such as the National Integrity Plan, to combat corruption, in order to improve the nation's competitiveness," said Ong, who is Housing and Local Government Minister.

The people should give their full support to Abdullah, Ong said.

"His compassionate leadership style is evident in his emphasis to eradicate poverty irrespective of race," he told reporters after chairing the party's central committee meeting at the MCA headquarters yesterday.

"The Prime Minister also emphasises on the needs of the less fortunate as well as working towards a more caring and morally conscious society."

Umno Youth chief Datuk Seri Hishammuddin Hussein said Dr Mahathir had gone overboard by going on a "personal attack" against his successor, saying that the comments were "unwarranted, uncalled for and unfair".

He said Dr Mahathir's criticism and views could not be accepted as merely that of any ordinary citizen because whatever he said had an impact on the Government and party, and affected public perception.

"We cannot accept a personal attack on the leadership which we feel is wrong. The choice of words (used by Tun) was just too much. It is disappointing to us," he said yesterday after chairing a Youth exco meeting.

Datuk Mukhriz Mahathir, an exco member and the son of the former prime minister and Khairy Jamaluddin, the son-in-law of the present Prime Minister both attended the meeting and were also present at the press conference.

In Kuching, Chief Minister Tan Sri Abdul Taib Mahmud said: "We received a strong mandate from the people in the just-concluded state election and we have formed the state government to carry out development programmes under the leadership of Pak Lah."