

# Supreme Council endorses support pledges

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**KUALA LUMPUR:** The Barisan Nasional supreme council has endorsed the pledges of support for the leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi by its various component parties.

The pledges of support, which was the outcome of the coalition's management committee meeting chaired by Umno deputy president Datuk Seri Mohd Najib Razak on Wednesday, was presented by MCA president Datuk Seri Ong Ka Ting during the council's meeting here yesterday.

"I am thankful for the support," Abdullah told reporters after chairing the Supreme Council meeting at the Putra World Trade Centre (PWTC) here.

The expressions of support from Barisan component party leaders came following strong criticism of Abdullah by former Prime Minister Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamad recently.

"The Barisan Nasional is still very strong. We are convinced that we will be able to do what is needed to bring prosperity and progress to the people, through the implementation of programmes under the Ninth Malaysia Plan," Abdullah said.

Tenders for many of the projects under the Plan, he said, had already been called and all parties concerned had been directed to ensure that the projects would not only be worthy of the money spent, but also be beneficial to those they were intended for.

Asked whether Umno planned to take action against Dr Mahathir for openly criticising him, Abdullah, who is also Umno president, said: "This is not an Umno meeting. I won't make any statement until after the Umno meeting."

Asked to respond to calls by certain quarters that guidelines be introduced on the kind of criticism that could be levelled at the leadership, the Prime Minister said it should be up to the people to heed such a suggestion.