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Abdullah-Attitude

DON'T ADOPT A DEFEATIST ATTITUDE, M'SIAN'S TOLD

By: Wan A Hulaimi

LONDON, April 1 (Bernama) -- Foreign Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said Malaysians must not adopt any attitude that may be regarded as defeatist.

He said the economic and financial problems faced by the country was not a tragedy but a tough lesson "for us to learn."

" Although the present situation required adjustments in many sectors, we must soldier on to ensure the economy continue to prosper, he said in a meeting with Malaysian students at Malaysia Hall here on Tuesday.

" The determination to succeed is the real wealth that we have," said Abdullah, who is here to attend the Second Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) which begins tomorrow.

Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is heading the Malaysian delegation to the three-day meeting.

" Let us draw a lesson from this. If you give up, you're finished," he said, urging Malaysian students not to be worried over the current situation in Malaysia.

Replying to a question on financial aid from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), he said Malaysia turned down the offer due to excessive conditions such as high interests for loans and liberalising the markets to their whims.

He said the conditions were unacceptable as they were contrary to the objectives of "our socio-economic development."

Earlier, Abdullah met Indonesian counterpart Ali Alatas for about an hour to discuss issues of bilateral interest including deportation of Indonesian illegal immigrants in Malaysia.

Abdullah said more than 17,500 Indonesians had slipped into Malaysia between January and March this year. -- BERNAMA

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