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Abdullah-Mahathir

DR MAHATHIR IS A MUSLIM LEADER MODERATE IN HIS THINKING, SAYS DPM

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 14 (Bernama) -- Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is a Muslim leader moderate in his thinking and attitude, acceptable to all levels of the Muslim and non-Muslim society here and abroad, said his deputy, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, today.

Abdullah said that most of Dr Mahathir's ideas and thoughts were relevant for Malaysia in entering the new millennium.

"Dr Mahathir is a leader acceptable to all because of his attitude which is not extreme. His views are accepted not only by Malaysian Muslims and non-Muslims but also other nationalities especially those in countries of the South," he told reporters after opening a seminar on "Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad's Thoughts".

Abdullah said that since becoming a leader, Dr Mahathir had brought about many changes to the country and was the greatest catalyst in the nation's development and progress of the race.

Among Dr Mahathir's successes, Abdullah said, was to instil confidence among Malaysians especially the Malays to attain excellence and greater achievements.

"What is emphasised by Dr Mahathir is that all facilities should be set up to provide opportunities to the people to acquire knowledge and skills or upgrade their professionalism because knowledge is the first step...", he said.

The deputy prime minister said that Dr Mahathir, an avid reader, has vast knowledge especially in subjects related to management, strategic thinking or economics and information technology which in his planning, would be a vital field in the country.

Abdullah said that Dr Mahathir's views on issues of globalisation, South-South development and human rights had been widely accepted.

"That is why several forms of international level cooperation have been successful and given recognition like the Langkawi International Dialogue-Smartpartnership which has been accepted by African nations and increasingly accepted by West Asian countries and the private sector," he said.

"It is not only relevant to Malaysia but also relevant at the international level," he said.

Abdullah also dismissed allegations by some quarters that Dr Mahathir is a dictator because he is ever ready to listen to the views of others.

"As the chairman at Cabinet meetings, Dr Mahathir allows lively discussions where everyone can express their views. In fact, there have been working papers tabled by Dr Mahathir himself rejected by the Cabinet," he said.

The deputy prime minister said that all views expressed by the Cabinet members would be heard and the interest of all parties would be taken into account before they were accepted.

Abdullah said that since he became a Cabinet member, he had never come across Dr Mahathir imposing his ideas on the Cabinet ministers as all views would be discussed and sometimes there were even heated discussions.

"All this with the aim of arriving at a consensus. Dr Mahathir always opt for total agreement of the Cabinet and not by a show of hands. He will try (to make amendments) until everyone agrees and everyone is satisfied," he said.

Abdullah said that it was because of the unanimous decisions of the

Cabinet that government decisions were readily accepted by the majority of the multi-racial society in the country.

-- BERNAMA

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