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Enhance self-confidence, Foreign Ministry staff urged

KUALA LUMPUR, Tues. - Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi urged Foreign Ministry staff to enhance their self-confidence and commitment to face challenges as they enter the new millennium.

He also reminded them that they must be prepared to cope with technological changes and globalisation.

"There is a need for the ministry's staff to be disciplined, dedicated, committed and to provide quality services," he said in his speech at the presentation of excellent service awards to 85 employees for 1995, 1996 and 1997.

Also present were Deputy Foreign Minister Datuk Dr Leo Michael Toyad, ministry's secretary-general Datuk Abdul Kadir Mohamed and senior officers.

Abdullah, the former Foreign Minister, who was named Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad on Friday, also urged the staff to foster the spirit of co-operation among the different races.

He described the public sector workers as the backbone of the Government administration who must also be ready for challenges posed by the information technology era, the Multimedia Super Corridor and the process of globalisation.

Abdullah said the implementation of the electronic-government concept would allow these workers quick access to data and information so they could better perform their tasks.

On the country's economic problem and the depreciation of the ringgit, he said it could not be denied that this had affected government workers and the people.

However, he said these problems must be addressed by all quarters and the public and private sectors must work together to overcome them.

"We must also prevent negative attempts from the outside to attack our country," he said, adding that public sector workers had been given the mandate and trust to serve the country, the people, and to help guide the nation out of the economic situation.

Abdullah said Wisma Putra had also been successful in adopting appropriate actions and strategies to counter foreign allegations against the government administration and national leaders.

"Our diplomats overseas have done their job well by disseminating the right kind of information on the actual situation in the country.

"Their efforts have yielded a positive response," he said.

Abdullah expressed confidence that the country would be able to overcome the economic problem through hard work.

On the international front, he said, the ministry had forged closer relations among Asean member countries and others in politics, economics, security, and in the social and cultural fields.

He commended all parties involved in ensuring Malaysia's success in being elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations' Security Council for 1999-2000.

"By obtaining the highest number of votes, Malaysia has received the recognition of the international community for its 'track record' on policy and diplomacy," he said.

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