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Abdullah-Development

ENSURE PROJECTS ARE COMPLETED BEFORE THE NEW MILLENNIUM, SAYS ABDULLAH

KEPALA BATAS, Jan 16 (Bernama) -- Agencies implementing development projects in the country should ensure that projects especially in the rural areas are not delayed and carried over into the new millennium, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

"When we enter the new millennium, we hope that there will not be any delayed projects and we must ensure that projects earmarked for a current year are completed on time," he said after meeting the people at Kampung Rantau Panjang, here, last night.

Abdullah said that the completion of all development projects would reflect greater capability and commitment of the government.

As such, he said, the cooperation of the people at all levels especially in the rural areas was essential because all development projects implemented were for the people's well-being.

He said that in line with the government's commitment to promote rural development, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad had proposed the setting up of a rural development task force.

Abdullah said that Dr Mahathir had appointed him as chairman of the task force which would meet soon to activate its machinery as soon as possible.

"When we enter the new millennium, we want the people especially the rural folk to have a high standard of living," he said.

He said that the government would never neglect the people in the rural areas as they were also entitled to benefits of development.

Abdullah said that Dr Mahathir regarded the task force as vital and wanted development projects in the rural areas to be implemented without delays.

Dr Mahathir, he said, wanted the people in the rural areas to enjoy progress and efforts must be made to assist them produce agricultural products and handicraft that could be marketed to increase their incomes.

The deputy prime minister said that even though the rural folk were not destitute, the government wanted poverty eradication programmes to continue as there were still people with low incomes.

As such, efforts must be made to encourage them increase their incomes through small industries.

Abdullah also said that the government's efforts to revive the nation's economy had been successful and the people had been able to maintain their standard of living.

He said that some 80,000 Malaysians were reported to have performed the umrah in the holy land the past weeks.

Felda settlers especially, he said, had much cash as the prices of palm oil were improving.

"Malaysia is blessed even though some people say that we are facing problems. Hopefully, things will even be better in future," he said.

Abdullah called on the people to continue giving their support to the government's efforts to revive the economy.

-- BERNAMA

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