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Abdullah-leaders

GOVT APPRECIATES EFFORTS TO RESURRECT LOVE FOR COUNTRY'S LEADERS

PETALING JAYA, Nov 9 (Bernama) -- The government appreciated the efforts by various quarters to resurrect the love for country's leaders among the people, said Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi.

Describing the efforts as timely, he said certain quarters were trying to incite the people to hate the country's leaders especially with the coming of the general election.

"The people should appreciate the services rendered by the country's leaders, those in the past and at present, in ensuring that the country remains stable politically and economically, and in that the people of all races can live in harmony without prejudice," he said when launching a album specially dedicated to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad in appreciation of his services and sacrifices to the nation, here last night.

The album entitled "Balada Seorang Pejuang" contained 10 patriotic songs and was published by the National Association of Poets Malaysia.

Abdullah said the country's four prime ministers -- (late) Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra, (late) Tun Razak Hussein, (late) Tun Hussein Onn and Dr Mahathir -- were outstanding leaders whose services should be appreciated by the people.

Dr Mahathir for example had done a lot in enhancing Malaysia's image internationally and he is a leader respected by the world community for his success in putting the country on the same level as developed countries, although Malaysia is still a developing country, he said.

Dismissing allegations by opposition parties that Dr Mahathir was power crazy, Abdullah recalled that during the constitutional crisis, Dr Mahathir had rejected the original draft to amend the Federal Constitution prepared by the Attorney-General.

Dr Mahathir had order the draft to be amended because it gave him too much power, he said.

Abdullah said this showed that Dr Mahathir was not power crazy as claimed by the opposition parties, nor was he ever a dictator.

He said all decisions made in Cabinet meetings were done through consensus and at times even a suggestion made by Dr Mahathir was rejected by the Cabinet.

Abdullah said he is not afraid if certain quarters were to distribute to the public tape recordings purportedly of Cabinet meetings as they were carried out according to procedures and there was nothing to hide.

He said Dr Mahathir would continue to be the prime minister because the country still needed his services and ideas especially in efforts to rehabilitate the country's economy.

--BERNAMA

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