

20 FEB 1999
Abdullah-IPU
GOVT HAS NEVER BEEN INHUMANE, SAYS ABDULLAH

PULAU PINANG, Feb 20 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said the government has never been inhumane to prison inmates in the country.

He said the government provided reasonable treatment and facilities to the inmates.

"They are treated as such because they had committed various crimes, don't expect them to receive accommodation and treatment similar to those provided by three, four or five star hotels," he told reporters after attending a thanks giving dinner organised by Balik Pulau Umno division at the Tabung Haji Complex in Bayan Lepas, here tonight.

Also present were Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Mohd Shariff Omar, State Exco members, Umno leaders and members.

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, was responding to a report by the International Parliamentary Union (IPU) committee today which described conditions in prisons in the country as "cruel, inhumane and degrading".

The report also said that conditions in the prisons here did not meet the standards specified by Article 11 of the United Nations Minimum Rules For The Treatment Of Prisoners.

The report was presented to the media today by DAP vice chairman M. Kula Segaran.

Abdullah said the foreign media had also reported that in developed countries there were worse prison conditions compared to the conditions here.

However, he said he did not intend to make comparisons between the prison conditions in this country and those of the other countries.

He said he was interested to read further on the IPU report which carried negative views on the conditions in Malaysian prisons.

At the press conference, Abdullah who is also chairman of the State Umno Liaison Body, said Pulau Pinang Umno would play an important role in assisting two Umno divisions in Sabah, namely Bandau and Marudu divisions, in facing the coming state elections.

He said Mohd Shariff, who is also deputy chairman of the State Umno Liaison Body, would lead the state Umno delegation to Sabah for the purpose.

He also said that the State Liaison Body which met today discussed the visit by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad to the state on April 1 and 2.

He said various programmes would be planned to give an opportunity to the prime minister to meet the people in the state and explain several issues relating government policies which were being implemented based on priority.

-- BERNAMA
SA AO