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Chinese-Umno

MALAYSIAN CHINESE TRUST UMNO, SAYS DIPLOMAT

KUALA LUMPUR, March 16 (Bernama) -- An understated aspect of the Malaysian success story is perhaps the deep trust the country's Chinese community has in Umno, said Malaysia's special envoy to the United Nations Datuk Abdullah Ahmad.

"This is because Umno leaders have built up such a high degree of credibility as national leaders, not as purely Malay leaders," he said.

Abdullah said this when addressing international relations students at Boston University on "Overseas Chinese: The Malaysian Experience" on Tuesday.

The text of the speech was made available here.

He said the Umno leadership throughout its 53-year history had been flexible, pragmatic and was willing to modify, if absolutely necessary, the founding principles of Malaysia to suit the interest of the nation without beholden to any particular race.

"Malaysia has always been fair towards its minorities. We are fair and just people. We do not spin myths of racial equality and meritocracy as stories as some people do," he said.

Abdullah said as Malaysia modernised and tried to narrow the gap between the Malays and non-Malay Malaysians, Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad and other Umno leaders had long begun to accept that Malaysia's multi-racial character was a key asset to achieve a developed-nation status by 2020.

He suggested that the students make field trips to Malaysia to see for themselves how the country had become a model of racial, cultural and religious tolerance.

"In several nations close by, a particular race dominates. Because we are what we are, we cannot afford nor do we want to see one race lives in constant fear or another reduced to being second class and a beleaguered minority," he said.

Abdullah also said the tradition of long-standing peace and harmony could be jeopardised if two antagonistic parties namely PAS and DAP formed an alliance out of political and electoral convenience for the next general election.

"They are now talking about this cooperation. The fundamentalist Islamists after their victory would terrify non-Muslims, the Chinese in particular, and for the DAP it would have been too late to make demands on PAS," Abdullah added.

-- BERNAMA

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