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Abdullah-post

PAK LAH SAYS HE IS NOT IN HURRY TO ASSUME HIGHEST POST

BANGI, May 4 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi today said he is in no hurry to assume Malaysia's premiership because discharging his present duties is more important.

He said he was happy carrying out the tasks and responsibilities entrusted upon him.

"I am in no hurry to assume the highest post. That is up to Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad," he said when approached by reporters whether he was ready to assume the role of prime minister.

He said this after closing the two-day District Officers Conference, here.

Last Sunday Dr Mahathir told reporters in Alor Setar that he would hand over the premiership to his deputy after the next general election when Abdullah is ready.

Abdullah, who assumed his post last January, said he was proud to serve under Dr Mahathir whom he described as a good, dedicated and hard working leader who was sometimes misunderstood by "those who do not understand his ways of doing things."

Abdullah, who is also carrying out the duties of the Umno deputy president, was appointed Deputy Prime Minister to replace Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim who was sacked from the Cabinet and Umno last September.

On April 14, Anwar, 51, was sentenced to six years' jail by the Kuala Lumpur High Court after he was found guilty of four counts of corrupt practice involving abuse of power.

Abdullah said: "To me, who works with and is close to him (Dr Mahathir), and is involved in many meetings and discussions on the country, especially economic recovery efforts, he is very committed to the success of all these efforts."

Abdullah, who is also Home Minister, said he was happy to be able to do a lot of work because it gave him an opportunity to contribute to the country's progress.

"I like to work hard ... there is a lot to do. In front of me there are stacks of work files that must be seen, read and cleared."

He said apart from office work he also had to visit many places like districts to check on the implementation of projects.

Abdullah said he wanted to be a deputy prime minister that was efficient in his work because that was the duty entrusted upon him.

"Even previously when I was a minister, I wanted to be an efficient one and this is my style," he said.

Abdullah said as the Deputy Prime Minister he did not have any other vision than to help realise the Vision 2020 that was the brainchild of Dr Mahathir and which has been accepted by the people.

"To me there is no need for any other vision because the important thing is to create an efficient, dynamic and corruption-free administration, and this is vital to produce a developed country with prosperous people," he said.

Abdullah said he would make visits to the districts as soon as possible to assess the status of projects.

"If there are problems we will try to settle them so that the projects can be implemented according to schedule," he said.

In his speech, he urged all district officers to follow the manual on work procedures and desk files that the government introduced to increase

efficiency in work implementation.

He said the procedure manual was still relevant in the implementation of work although it might now be different in terms of implementation of the types of projects.

He was concerned that the manual might be neglected or forgotten because the generation under which it was introduced had retired or moved to higher posts.

"I told them that if there are problems with the work procedure manual, it can be revised and streamlined," he said.

-- BERNAMA

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