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Abdullah-Economy

PEOPLE TOLD TO HELP IN ECONOMIC RECOVERY EFFORTS

KEPALA BATAS, Jan 20 (Bernama) -- The people should play their role to help make a success of the economic recovery measures taken by the government, Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today.

He said the government and the National Economic Action Council (NEAC) were making efforts to steer the country out of the economic downturn, but their success would depend on the people's continued support and cooperation. The NEAC is headed by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

"The government only plans, issues directives and formulates specific policies, but it is the people who are directly involved in implementing many aspects of the economic recovery measures," he told reporters at Hari Raya open house at his mother's residence here.

Abdullah said the government's determined efforts had begun to bear fruit as there were signs of the economy recovering, and if this trend could be sustained he was confident that economic activities would be as vibrant as before.

The positive signs included an increase in the country's reserves and the RM3.8 billion in sales recorded during the recent month-long Home Ownership Campaign, he said.

He said Hari Raya celebrations were not dampened by the economic problem and the way it was celebrated, including the generous spread of goodies at open house, was as if there had been no economic downturn.

"The people are just as happy celebrating Hari Raya this time around and the joy is not limited to Muslims but is also shared by non-Muslims. All these could be enjoyed because the people are confident of the country's peace and economic stability," he said.

More than 20,000 people turned up at the open house which began at 11am. Leading the dignitaries were Yang Dipertua Negeri Tun Dr Hamdan Sheikh Tahir and his wife, Chief Minister Tan Sri Dr Koh Tsu Koon, Deputy Chief Minister Datuk Mohamed Shariff Omar and other state Barisan Nasional (BN) leaders.

Earlier, in the morning, Abdullah and his wife Datin Seri Endon Mahmood Ambak, visited Tun Dr Hamdan at his residence Seri Mutiara on the island.

They met Tun Dr Hamdan and his wife for about 30 minutes before adjourning to a Hari Raya reception where they were joined by Koh, Shariff, State Secretary Datuk Jamaluddin Ahmad Damanhuri, several state Exco members and their wives.

Abdullah's delegation then left for his mother's house, and on the way a police patrol car in the convoy rammed into a car on the North-South Highway near Bandar Seberang Jaya.

The accident happened at 10.55am when the car pulled up at the righthand most lane to make way for the convoy.

The two policemen in the patrol car and the driver and passengers of the car escaped unhurt.

-- BERNAMA

ZU YBY