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PM to table White Paper on economic situation

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KEPALA BATAS, Sat. - Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad will table a White Paper on the nation's economic situation in the Dewan Rakyat meeting starting Monday.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said today the Prime Minister would also table the Seventh Malaysia Plan's mid-term review.

The White Paper would, among other things, highlight the numerous socio-economic achievements despite the economic slowdown over the past two years.

"The people can better understand the problems affecting the country and the efforts made to overcome them.

"We have made good achievements. This is because of the enormous support from the people to all efforts taken by the Government to sustain growth despite the problems," he said when opening the Bertam Umno branch delegates' conference.

Abdullah, who is MP for Kepala Batas, is also Bertam Umno branch chairman.

Commending Malaysians for strongly contributing towards the success of the five-year economic plan, which ends next year, he said: "Take, for instance, the past two years. Malaysians have given their fullest co-operation to the Government to resolve the economic crisis.

"In addition, they have co-operated in ensuring political stability and this is essential if economic programmes are to be carried out effectively."

He said Malaysia's economic recovery efforts, once condemned by many, including foreign economists, were now accepted even by critics.

"One of them was US President Bill Clinton. Recently, we heard him sharing similar concerns on several global economic issues which had earlier been raised by Dr Mahathir."

On the unemployment rate, which stands at about four per cent, Abdullah said it could be due to "too many Malaysians being choosy about jobs available".

"There are about a million foreign workers here," he said.

"The huge foreign workforce suggests there are a lot of work out there, but our people are too choosy."

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