

02 FEB 1999

Abdullah-Mr Clean

"MR CLEAN" TAG SERVES A REMINDER TO ME, SAYS ABDULLAH

KUALA LUMPUR, Feb 2 (Bernama) -- Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi said tonight that the "Mr Clean" tag given to him by the local and foreign media served as a reminder.

"I take it as a reminder that I must be always clean, efficient and trustworthy. I steadfastly hold to the Prime Minister's slogan before," he said in a special interview with New Straits Times Group Editor-in-Chief Datuk A.Kadir Jasin aired live over RTM's TV1.

He said this when responding to a question whether he regarded as a burden the "Mr Clean" tag given to him by the local and foreign media.

He said the Clean, Efficient and Trustworthy slogan which was popularised since 1982 was not merely a government slogan but was also meant to the people from all strata of society and the private sector.

Asked what role he could play as the Deputy Prime Minister, Abdullah said it depended on the support from the people and party.

Abdullah said it was important that he cooperated and supported Dr Mahathir who is the head of government and Barisan Nasional (BN), the ruling coalition.

He said he regarded the people's high expectations on his appointment as the Deputy Prime Minister as a responsibility he had to shoulder.

Asked on the comments of former Deputy Prime Minister Tan Sri Musa Hitam in Minggu Malaysia recently reminding Abdullah on his DPM's post based on his (Musa) experience working as DPM under Dr Mahathir, Abdullah said he understood his duties.

Recounting his ups and downs in politics, Abdullah said his re-appointment to the Cabinet after being dropped for about four years showed Dr Mahathir recognised his consistent and continued contributions to Umno.

He said although he had no Cabinet post and was merely the MP for Kepala Batas, he had concentrated his efforts for political activities nation-wide.

"To me, Umno gives an opportunity to struggle in politics for the country, race and religion. That's why, in my ups and downs in politics, I will continue my struggle in Umno," he added.

-- BERNAMA

RV TS