

13/08/2000

`Arms heist poses a threat to all'

Hamidah Atan

MALACCA, Sat. - The recent arms heist staged by the Al-Ma'unah cult in Sauk, Perak, poses a threat not only to Umno and the Malays but also to other Barisan Nasional parties and the non-Malays.

Deputy Prime Minister Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, who is also Umno deputy president, said the non-Malays and component parties should not regard the threat as "Umno's or the Malays' problem".

"It is a threat to all of us, Malays and non-Malays alike.

"The BN views the incident seriously as it endangers the system we have been upholding all these years," he said.

"Such a threat can not only strain or affect the good ties among the various races in the country, but can also lead to instability and chaos."

Abdullah added that racial clashes or conflicts must be avoided at all costs if the country was to remain stable and developed.

"We must be free of all forms of threat and defend the present system and the BN formula.

"The BN formula has contributed to the many success stories and progress of the country and its people," he said when addressing some 500 State Umno and Barisan Nasional party leaders at the State's Umno headquarters in Jalan Hang Tuah today.

Abdullah, who was on a one-day working visit to Malacca, earlier opened the temporary Malacca International Trade Centre.

He said the BN parties must continue to foster good relationship and co-operation with one another in order for the ruling coalition and Government to remain strong and stable.

"It is the responsibility of all parties in the BN to work hand-in-hand with each other to get rid of the hatred which is being instilled against the Government by certain quarters.

"We must understand this and we must continue to co-operate (with each other) in overcoming whatever obstacles and challenges that come our way."

On a report that the International Monetary Fund had commended Malaysia's economic recovery policies, Abdullah said: "The truth has finally prevailed.

"(Prime Minister Datuk Seri) Dr Mahathir (Mohamad) and the rest of the Cabinet members always believe the controls would work for the people and our economy, and they did.

"We will continue to monitor the measures taken to overcome whatever problem that may crop up before it gets out of hand. This has contributed to faster economic growth."

The International Monetary Fund, in its report, had stated that it should now be accepted as a matter of fact that Malaysia's selective capital control measures "are not so bad" and that the country's own method of economic recovery is one of the lessons learnt by the IMF.

In the report released in Washington on Thursday, its executive directors noted that the improved economic performance has boosted confidence and improved Malaysia's banking and corporate balance sheets.